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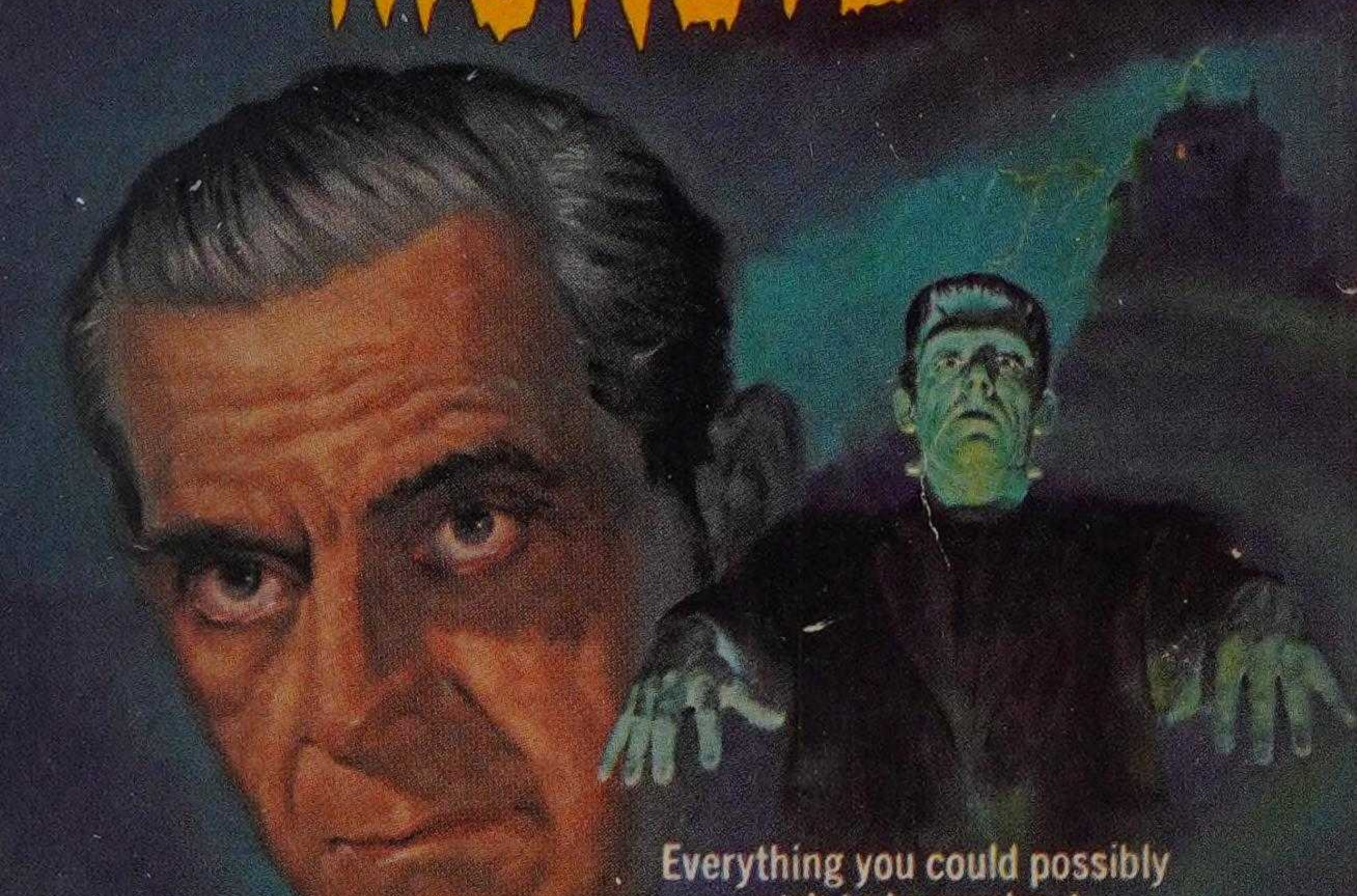
BORIS KARLOFF

THE FRANKENSCIENCE MONSTER



Everything you could possibly wish to know about the late, great Boris Karloff.

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About the Author

Forrest J Ackerman shared, in tandem with Boris Karloff, the first Ann Radcliffe Award ("for significant contributions to Gothic excellence") from the Count Dracula Society.

He scripted what Karloff narrated for the Decca Longplay album, *An Evening With Boris Karloff And His Friends.*

He created, as far as is known, the first recorded list of fantastic films in 1931 (published January 1932)—and FRANKENSTEIN was on the list with DRACULA, THE GOLEM, DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE, etc.

He created the *genre* of the "filmonster" magazine with the editing of *Famous Monsters of Filmland* magazine, which first appeared in February 1958 and is still edited by him on a bimonthly basis.

He has appeared in the films THE TIME TRAVELERS and QUEEN/PLANET OF BLOOD (title depending on whether it's seen on a theater or a TV screen) and was scheduled to act with the King in a "Karloffilm."

He has edited three paperback collections of *Famous Monsters;* a collection of his own work and collaborations, *The Science Fiction Worlds of Forrest J Ackerman and His Friends,* is currently in print from Powell Sci-Fi (there will be a second collection later in the year); and Follett Publishing Co. is bringing out his hardcover anthology, "Here There Be Dinosaurs."

He was awarded the world's first Hugo.

He knows more about films of fantasy than anyone on earth.

The Publishers

FORREST J ACKERMAN

THE FRANKENSCIENCE MONSTER

AN ACE BOOK

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DEDICATED

in gratitude and loving memory
to
the Santa Claus who
made us a present of so many years of his
life pretending to be The Big Bad Wolf
and to
his widow Evelyn
and his daughter Sara Jane
and
for special reasons
to
Robert Bloch, Lon Chaney, Sr., Alex Gordon,
Peter J. Jarman, Carl Laemmle Sr., Verne Langdon,
Sheri McAdams, James H. Nicholson, Charles Nuetzel,
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Braxton Wells, and James Whale.

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FAREWELL TO THE MASTER

Forrest J Ackerman

When I was a kid and the great national wit Will Rogers was alive, I often heard it quoted of him that he had "never met a man he didn't like." But when he died in a plane crash in 1935 he had no knowledge of World War II to come and Adolf Hitler who would during the course of those dark years of horror give the world 24 hours to get out: I often wondered if Will would have been prepared to make an exception in Adolf's case?

Or if, anachronistically, he might have been less charitable had he been an unwilling guest of the Marquis de Sade.

There is a point to be made here and I shall make it forthwith.

Upon the death of Boris Karloff, every adjective in the Unabridged Thesaurus equating with kindliness and courtesy and so on was put into public print. Obituaries the world over referred to "the gentle monster," his love of children, his grace, his bearing, his charm, his wit.

I never believed it of Will Rogers. I take no pleasure in seeking for feet of clay in public idols and would be delighted to be proven dead wrong about Will. But I've always had this niggling-naggling sneaking suspicion that if I searched hard enough, met enough people who knew Rogers, got to one of them in an unguarded moment, I'd hear them say, "Why, you should have heard what Will thought of so-and-so—!"

Not so with Boris Karloff. I can't quite picture the truck-driver-between-movie-parts that he was in 1931 as being quite as gracious a person as he was at 81, but in the twilight of his life he was certainly *terrific*. In my many inquiries concerning him I haven't heard a bad word about

him—not that I expected any, not that I would care to learn he was other than I had every reason to believe.

Some years back a movie (I'd forgotten its title but a call to Robert Bloch quickly brought the answer: THE GREAT MAN)—there was this movie which was about a universally beloved performer of some sort—radio, TV or stage personality—and after he died somebody went around to various acquaintances to research a story about him and . . . well, like, *forget it*. Like the sadistic sergeant, he was rotten to the corps.

Somewhere along the line someone connected with the screen version of the life of Lon Chaney Sr.—THE MAN OF A THOUSAND FACES—told me that the deeper the scalpel on Chaney probed, the more disenchanting his personality became. I personally want to hear no more for I shall always adore the *reel* genius of Lon Chaney.

I admire HGWells above all science fiction authors and have been mildly disturbed most of my adult life because a long time ago an s.f. correspondent in England told me he was off Wells because, as I recall after all these years, of something he (my friend) had observed Wells say or do in public. World-smasher Wells, smashed? The World Brain, bigoted? A monosyllabic Wells discoursing in Anglo-Sexon, or Base English? The mind boggles and I never really want to find out the awful truth.

But the beautiful part about Boris Karloff, the point I wish so pointedly to make, is that it all *wasn't* fake. With his fate now in my hands, I don't have to lie, fabricate, prevaricate, cover up, so that those legions who love him can continue to think of him as a superior human being. Because, in pure point of fact, he was just that: a marvelous man.

If you're looking for me to say anything derogatory about Boris Karloff, I hope you've already spent your money to purchase this because you're the kind of person who *deserves* to pay to be disappointed. This book with accuracy could be subtitled "A Love Letter to Mr. Wonderful." The worst thing you are liable to read about Boris Karloff in this whole book is that one of his performances was "only adequate." And that wouldn't be *my* opinion, that would just be quoting some long-forgotten and dyspeptic critic who himself probably should have been criticized!

Boris Karloff was a Living Legend, a loving husband and a shoo-in for Santa Claus if the monster lovers of America (other countries as well) had ever got the vote.

It was at Christmastime 1931 that I first became *aware* of Boris Karloff, in FRANKENSTEIN, although I must have seen him as early as 1927 in TARZAN AND THE GOLDEN LION and at least a dozen other pictures including John Barrymore's Svengali-like MAD GENIUS; and little did the teenager (16) at the time who was me dream that nearly 40 years later out of every grownup boy in the world he would be the one to lay the laurel wreath on the life of one of the screen immortals who, along with Lon Chaney, Al Jolson, Maurice Chevalier and Marlene Dietrich, he has admired most throughout his life.

If you want to know what it feels like to be the one chosen, once again I must refer to the Thesaurus, therein to consult all synonyms for "humble," "grateful"—and also "scared."

If I should not do Boris Karloff justice, I would kill myself. I have only two hectic crowded weeks in which to produce this, 14 days before flying to Rio de Janeiro for the 2nd International Film Festival where science fiction luminaries like A. E. van Vogt, George Pal, Theodore Sturgeon, Robert Heinlein, Robert Bloch, Alfred Bester, Philip José Farmer, Sam Moskowitz, Lester del Rey and perhaps a quarter hundred others will participate in the Science Fiction Film and Literature Symposium during which, if all goes as scheduled, Elsa Lanchester will appear in conjunction with the film in which she played opposite Boris Karloff, THE BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN, and dedicate the occasion to his memory.

I would have *liked* six months to prepare this book. But, in a way, my whole life has prepared me for it.

I would have *liked* for Boris Karloff to have lived to celebrate his 100th birthday before a TV camera.

A little poem I once wrote seemed to distress most everyone who read it except just about the one person in the world to whom it could have meant the most: the devoted first wife, Celia Lovsky, who still holds dear the memory of her one time husband, now dead—Peter Lorre.

The only reason I am doing this book is because I hope to please practically everybody but I would be richly rewarded if it just satisfied Mrs. Karloff, or his daughter Sara Jane, or two of his loving friends, Bob and Ellie Bloch.

But of course a total of four sales wouldn't make the publisher very happy, so excuse me now while I set about burning the midnight oil and the candle at both ends and the middle. Since he *was* the best, he deserves the best, and

the Appreciations of Christopher Lee, Elsa Lanchester, Vincent Price, Lon Chaney Jr. and cthers will attest to that.

Here I go now to do my best for Boris Karloff.

FORREST J ACKERMAN
Hollywood, *Karloffornia*
At midnight on Friday 7 March, 1969, the day I got the telephoned OK from Donald A. Wollheim, the Editor-in-Chief of ACE, to go full speed ahead to completion on **Project: Karloff.**

KARLOFF SUCCUMBS AT 81

A Tribute by

Forrest J Ackerman

Reprinted from the 464th issue of Science Fiction Times, *March 1969.*

HGWells. Hugo Gernsback & Frank R. Paul. Edgar Rice Burroughs. And now—Boris Karloff. Time stops for another immortal of the science fiction field but his achievements live on.

When the first list of science fiction motion pictures—"scientifilms"—ever compiled was published. (*The Time Traveller* Jan. 1932), FRANKENSTEIN was on the list. The film had just been released, Christmas 1931), and after 15 years of relative obscurity on screen, Boris Karloff was discovered at last. He had appeared in Kosmik Films' HOPE DIAMOND MYSTERY, a serial, in 1921; THE CAVE GIRL (not Burroughs) same year; THE BELLS, 1926, in the role of a Caligari-like mesmerist; TARZAN AND THE GOLDEN LION (Burroughs') in 1927; THE UNHOLY NIGHT with Lionel Barrymore in 1929; and the Mascot serial KING OF THE WILD in 1931. In fact he made 15 films in 1931, including a Svengali-like movie with John Barrymore, THE MAD GENIUS, but it was Mary Sheiley's monster story that catapulted him to instant fame and made him a household word for nearly 40 years.

Frankenscience was his forte.

How happy we "stf" (s.f., sci-fi) fans were, starved for science fiction fare in the 30s, when the Karloffilms came into vogue. Many were fantasy, of course; horror; such as the classic Im-ho-tep role of the 3700-year-dead-yet-living MUMMY; THE OLD DARK HOUSE; THE MASK OF FU MANCHU; THE GHOUL; THE BLACK CAT; THE RAVEN; but in 1935 the trend began to change toward "frankenscience" films—the beautiful BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN—with screen story after story in which he "meddled with things man was meant to leave alone" and "tampered in God's domain"—THE INVISIBLE RAY, THE MAN WHO LIVED AGAIN, THE WALKING DEAD, SON OF FRANKENSTEIN, MAN THEY COULDN'T HANG, THE

APE, BEFORE I HANG, BLACK FRIDAY, MAN WITH 9 LIVES . . .

He made about 150 films in all. THE DEVIL COMMANDS was adapted from William Sloane's well-known novel, *The Edge of Running Water*. After 3 appearances as the Frankenstein monster he abandoned the role of the creature but continued to play other parts in HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN and FRANKENSTEIN–1970 (made in 1958). He was outstanding in THE BODY SNATCHER for Robert Wise, of DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL fame. He played for Cecil B. deMille in UNCONQUERED, with Danny Kaye in THE SECRET LIFE OF WALTER MITTY.

In the final 5 years of his life he was a busy man, "commuting" from his native England, continuing to make films in Hollywood. He showed great presence in THE RAVEN as Dr. Scarabus, 1963, the same year he went thru a marathon in 2 or 3 days and played all his scenes for a picture called THE TERROR; in 1964 he did COMEDY OF TERRORS and BLACK SABBATH; in 1965–DIE, MONSTER, DIE–adapted from Lovecraft's *Colour Out of Space;* followed by BLIND MAN'S BLUFF, made in Spain; THE SORCERERS; THE CRIMSON ALTAR with Christopher Lee; TARGETS (an exceptionally fine performance under the direction of Peter Bogdanovich); and 4 to-be-released productions on which, an oxygen tank by his wheelchair, he worked for 5 weeks in Hollywocd late last year, THE ISLE OF THE SNAKE PEOPLE, THE FEAR CHAMBER, HOUSE OF EVIL and (not the Leinster work) THE INCREDIBLE INVASION. He was scheduled to do THE DARK in England at the time of his death and return to Karloffornia for 5 more films. His Jonathan Winter TV show last Halloween where, despite lacking half a lung, and crippled with arthritis (one leg in an iron brace), he put on a spirited performance, his last as an amiable mad doctor, and even talked a song ("It Was A Very Good Year").

His name appeared as editor of *And the Darkness Falls* (World, 1946, 631 pages, with 72 selections including Lovecraft, CASmith, Collier, Derleth, Doyle, Dunsany); *Tales of Terror* ('43 Tower); and, in both hardcover & paperback in 1965 & 1967, *The Boris Karloff Horror Anthology* with Bloch, Sturgeon, HPL, Silverberg, Hamilton and others.

He made numerous phonograph albums and at the age of 78 recorded for Decca *An Evening with Boris Karloff and His Friends*, which I was privileged to script.

Producer Alex Gordon (THE ATOMIC SUBMARINE,

THE UNDERSEA CITY) had intended that I should play a part opposite Karloff in a projected motion picture MONSTER IN MY BLOOD (from Stuart J. Byrne's "The Metamorphs") but Death has rung down the curtain on that dream.

From Dave Kyle, who used him daily on his New York radio station WPDM, I learned that Karloff for years had recorded anecdotes from the pages of the *Reader's Digest*.

His whole stage career is a separate chapter, highlighted by ARSENIC & OLD LACE, PETER PAN, ON BORROWED TIME . . .

In the last year of his life an historic meeting between him and scientifilm maestro Fritz Lang (METROPOLIS, WOMAN IN THE MOON, SIEGFRIED) was arranged by Robert Bloch. The two elderly statesmen of fantastic films fell in love with each other at first sight, referred to each other for the rest of the night as "the two old dinosaurs."

Karloff has his own star on the sidewalks of Hollywood.

He received *two* Ann Radcliffe Awards during his lifetime for outstanding contributions to the Gothic field and at the Count Dracula Society's 7th Annual Banquet Saturday 19 April at the Knickerbocker Hotel in Hollywood a posthumous award will be made to him for his entire career. This latter action was decided on *before* his death and I am happy to say he was aware of it.

The newspaper clichés—"monster of menace actually mild-mannered gentleman"—were absolutely accurate, I can guarantee from personal experiences. I never met a more modest, unassuming, thoughtful, courteous, kind or obliging "great man"—many of the qualities one associates with the late Tony Boucher—and he meant a great deal to me personally as I am sure he did to many of you.

At the risk of calling another idol of mine—HGWells—wrong, Wells, through his character John Cabal in *Things to Come*, said: "No man is indispensable." He had forgotten Boris Karloff.

Karloff had a daughter, Sara Jane, born on his own birthday, Nov. 23, but there is no son of Frankenstein even to *attempt* to carry on the Karloff tradition.

He's gone, physically; there'll be no KARLOFF—1970. No "KARLOFF CELEBRATES 100th BIRTHDAY BEFORE CAMERAS!" But his memory will endure; his laurel leaf on the filmic branch of the tree of science fiction will remain secure and evergreen.

Prepare the quintessence of tana leaves and with the pen of Poe let the name of BORIS KARLOFF now be inscribed

on the 10-point steel black monolith—on the ultimate science fiction accolade that we the grateful living can accord to the dead who served our cause with such consummate distinction.

HOMAGE TO THE DEPARTED HERO

Almost to a man (and to one very important woman in his film career, the widow of Charles Laughton) they responded to my letters, telephone calls and one cablegram—overseas to his one time next door neighbor and twice motion picture co-star, Christopher Lee. I set no word lengths; my simple request was: "Say whatever is in your heart about Boris Karloff."

These are the responses brought forth.

Vincent Price

To me Boris Karloff was not only a great actor but a dear and long time friend. What I admired most about him was his enormous gratitude to the public and movie makers who made it possible for him to have such a long and productive career. He often spoke of it and with great feeling and always with humor. That humor was of course the secret of his charm, humor and genuine concern for his friends.

I worked with him from the beginning of my career, THE TOWER OF LONDON, right up till the end of last year when we did the opening *Red Skelton Show* together. His amazing fortitude at that time only went to confirm my very deep respect for him as an actor and person. The whole show was devised to allow Boris to play it in a wheelchair but on his first entrance dress rehearsal night he sensed a chill from the audience at seeing him to their mind completely crippled. He set his mind to playing it standing up and on that gruelling day of the show he went through every run-through on his feet—he was needless to say wonderful as usual and the audience loved him as did all of us on the show.

One of my favorite movies was with Boris, Peter Lorre and Basil Rathbone, THE COMEDY OF TERRORS. What wonderful fun they all were and how I shall miss them all. All of them were highly intelligent, extremely kind and vastly amusing men. None of them felt other but privileged to have had a faithful public for so many years.

I am proud to have worked with all of them and to have counted them among my closest friends.

* * *

Lon Chaney

They wanted me to go on television and talk about him but I had to turn them down because, to be honest with you, I didn't know him that well. And—you all know me—I'm not the gushy type. Just let me say that it was a pleasure to work with him—way back in '45 when we made HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN together, and in '52 in THE BLACK CASTLE—and some years later when we did that *Route 66* stunt where I played my Dad's role of the Hunchback and Karloff was his own best creation, the Frankenstein monster. I was glad to get the chance to carry on his role in GHOST OF FRANKENSTEIN, and like everybody else in show business, I guess we knew his death was to be expected, all the same it's sure hard to think of an actor like him gone after all the years he was active on the screen. He and I both got an award from the Dracula Society, and to all its members and the readers of this book, who I know will miss him most of all, let me say I'm sure it was a blessing to have so many people care about him at his age.

Rest in Peace, Boris Karloff.

* * *

Christopher Lee

"We are all terribly distressed—it is a gap in my life and the end of an era in the Cinema. We shall not see his like again. . . .

"As I explained in my cable, Evie [Mrs. Karloff] does *not* want flowers and the funeral is entirely private for family only. She is bearing up wonderfully.

"I believe the end was peaceful and indeed it must have seemed a blessing."

Then, the next day:

"As a follow-up to my letter of yesterday:

"I can quite understand how you are feeling—you are one among countless thousands who will mourn the passing of a noble human being.

"He was a master of his craft, who gave pleasure to

millions for many years and whose work will serve as an object lesson for years to come to many more.

"I always found him a wise and understanding friend, with a fund of warmth and humour and above all, of indomitable courage & cheerfulness in the face of great physical adversity.

"He truly loved his fellow men . . ."

* * *

THE BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN:

The director and the make-up man could not make a figure of hate out of him as Frankenstein's monster. It seems as if he taught the audience the delightful game of pretending to be frightened. The director, James Whale, set him in situations of total loneliness, but it was the beautiful inner spirit of Karloff himself that gave him the ability to feel compassion, and transfer that emotion to the audience.

I would have liked to have known him better. I got to know him a little in the first film that Charles Laughton ever made in Hollywood, THE OLD DARK HOUSE, and of course when I was the Bride of Frankenstein (in name only).

Years later he came to our house to talk about a play to Charles. Always extraordinarily gentle and modest, it eventually dawned on his vast public that he was a highly intelligent, and rather sophisticated person.

Elsa Lanchester

* * *

THE DRACULA SOCIETY'S PRESIDENT

One of the last letters Boris Karloff wrote was sent to me.

Just a few days before his death I received the following letter from Boris Karloff:

"Jan. 17. Dear Mr. Reed:

"I am more than proud that your Society has voted me a special Mrs. Ann Radcliffe Award.

"Unhappily I will not be in Hollywood at that time but I would be more than happy if you could persuade my friend Mr. Robert Bloch, whom I am happy to see is also receiving an Award, to accept on my behalf. I am writing Mr. Bloch by this same mail to ask him if he will be kind enough to do this for me."

Our 7th Annual Awards Dinner will take place on April

19 but among the 250 chairs in the Hollywood Room of the Knickerbocker Hotel will be an empty chair reserved in memory of the King of Horror Films, Mr. Boris Karloff, who in spirit will always be with us.

Donald Reed

* * *

THE "MEAL WITH A MONSTER" INTERVIEWER

Karloff is dead. An era ends . . . Shocked by the sad news, yet expecting it, I asked myself: what can be done to preserve his memory. Many things, of course. Books, articles, essays, photo stories . . . but NOW what can be done? The answer is simple: Forrest Ackerman must edit a special memorial all-Karloff issue. He deserved it. No one will ever replace him. He reigned supreme in his genre.

The king is dead. I count myself lucky to have known him—even for an afternoon!

William Nolan

* * *

PETER LORRE'S WIDOW

Celia Lovsky told us the following over the phone:

"He was a wonderful man.

"I did the last *Playhouse 90* with him, the hour and a half long television show written by Rod Serling called 'In the Presence of Mine Enemy.'

"Peter knew him, of course. They did 'You'll Find Out' and 'The Boogey Man Will Get You' together, and toward the end of Peter's life, those two comedies that they enjoyed doing so much: 'The Raven' and 'The Comedy of Terrors.'

"You can't imagine what a fine gentleman he was. Peter liked him immensely."

Celia Lovsky

(Miss Lovsky played the beautiful elf-eared dictatrix of Spock's planet in the *Star Trek* episode known as "Amok Time"; Lon Chaney Sr.'s mother in THE MAN OF A THOUSAND FACES; had a cameo role in Geo. Pal's most recent science fiction film, THE POWER; and once played Alraune Mandragore, the soulless female Frankenstein, on the stage in Germany.)

* * *

He taught us about death; that's what he was here for. I very much doubt that, early in life, he guessed that that would be his function, to help us make do with some dreadful facts. Some realities are so terribly real that they are too much to assimilate all at once, so first we must take them on through various of the arts. If anything as fancy as that had been suggested to Mr. Karloff even this late in the day, he might not have laughed, but I think he would have smiled. The temptation is to put too much weight upon fantasy or not enough. We must balance our scales somewhere between.

In any event, there isn't enough good teaching about death in any age. *Or* the mysteries and myths that collect up around death and the life we lead moving toward mortality. There are many writers we could list, Mary Shelley, Bram Stoker, Edgar Poe among them, but few actors who, in a way, dedicated their lives to inking in the shadows on the wall even as the shadows fell there from some grotesque reality.

Boris Karloff was one of those rare few. And he was very special. There is no one else alive like him, today, nor, in his time, was there any real competition from Bela Lugosi. One would have to go back to the Twenties, and the films of Chaney Sr., to find an equally rare competitor.

I met Karloff only once and it was as the gentleman I guessed him to be that we were introduced, chatted for a short while, and never met again. The memory however is a good one and will last. I had always sensed that one of the reasons we went back and back again to all the Karloff films, even when they were no good at all, was to see him and to be taught by him. In the flimsiest of stuffs, we trusted that man who lived inside the actor's robes or behind the greasepaint. We knew he would never hurt us, but only try to instruct us to the real ways of a world that is often nightmare. So we wanted to find out about it not from a sick man or a deformed aesthete of some sort, but from a nice chap who could sit around the fire nights with a glass of sherry and converse.

Well, we had our long conversation with the man, didn't we? Starting when most of us were nine or ten and going right on up to this year when he made his last call, left his neat card, bowed, put on his hat, and left. His films, most of them mediocre, some of them bad, a few of them

really fine, will linger with us for the rest of our lives. Wasn't it nice, knowing the Gentleman? Aren't we sad to see him go? But wasn't it fine he stayed on so long for another talk shortly after midnight? We all knew him, didn't we? even though only met on a shadow screen in a dark show in a small town somewhere in the midwest a long time ago.

–FINIS–

* * *

Alex Gordon
Producer

You could look the wide world over to find a finer person –and a finer actor. I was very proud when my brother was able to cast him in CORRIDORS OF BLOOD and it was wonderful to have a reunion with him from time to time, such as during the shooting of THE RAVEN and, the last time, at the Magic Castle party put on for him on the occasion of the release of his Decca "Friends" record. Always, at such times, his unique personality was a sheer delight.

I am sure all his admirers will rejoice with me to learn that there is to be a BORIS KARLOFF THEATER erected in London specifically to show nothing but the type of film with which he was so intimately associated. Sometimes, sadly, such recognition comes posthumously; in this case, fate was kind and Boris was alive to appreciate this signal honor accorded him at the end of his life.

(Ed. note: What Hollywood shamefully denied him–his handprints and signature in the cement at Grauman's Chinese forecourt–London makes up for with this wonderful project. Only a handful–Helen Hayes, the Barrymores, Marion Davies, Al Jolson and perhaps a few others–have ever attained such a distinction. For Karloff, an honor most meritted.)

* * *

Fritz Lang

I regret I didn't meet him till the last year of his life. It was at dinner at Robert Bloch's. Forry Ackerman was there. He can tell you I liked Karloff immensely.

* * *

George Pal

His death really hit me hard even though I had never met him. He was the kind of person you instinctively *wanted* to meet. I wish I could have used him in one of my films. God bless him.

(And God bless you, George. The best use to which you could put the Time Machine that HGWells loaned you, I feel at this time, would be to go back 40 years and bring us a young Boris Karloff to make more pictures for us till 2009, when it would be time for *another* rescue. He was one king we all *really* wanted to live forever . . . FJA)

* * *

John L. Dales

National Executive Secretary of the Screen Actors Guild

It is commonly said that no man is indispensable. If that means no man is irreplaceable, I disagree. The acting profession and the Screen Actors Guild have just lost an irreplaceable man—Boris Karloff.

Boris was one of the 15 original founders of the Guild in June of 1933. This was no honorary society—it was a dangerous bit of business. Boris was not the type to go along for the ride. He was a courageous and aggressive force. He felt injustice and he reacted to it. He continued to serve his fellow actors as an active member of the Guild Board until the early 1950's. He served on every negotiating committee during that period—an outspoken, challenging advocate for the many who dared not speak for themselves, innovative, intelligent and articulate.

As an actor he was equally dedicated and he wore his success with becoming modesty. He honestly believed—and often reiterated—that all credit was due others, his make-up man, his director, his co-workers.

Although in recent months working was an agonizing effort, he recently told me, "All they have to do is lean me against a prop, give me a shot of oxygen and I'm ready."

One yearns to believe that all performers—particularly the newer generation—realize their indebtedness to Boris and his kind.

We have lost a true professional. If an epitaph were needed it would be "He loved his fellow man."

(The foregoing tribute reprinted with permission of the editor from the March-April 1969 issue of *Screen Actor*.)

* * *

THE DULWICH HORROR

Jonah Maurice Ruddy

Most of you probably remember from your childhood days the story of the Monster who complained bitterly because no one was kind to him and everybody thought he must be cruel and heartless. He didn't at all like being a Monster, and was very glad when circumstances enabled him to return to life as a normal human being. That is exactly how Boris Karloff feels. He has been a Monster, chilling the bones of millions of filmgoers by his realistic impersonations of madmen and Frankenstein's Monster. His acting has brought him immense popularity and wealth, and thousands of letters from children sympathizing with him in his terrible plight. But he does so want a chance to act straight roles, where he does not have to frighten his audiences and can concentrate upon good acting.

Like the Monster of the fairy story, he is changing back to being an ordinary human being. But his admirers still like him as a Monster, and, even if he never makes any more pictures of this kind, he will still linger in their affections as the man who almost scared them out of their wits.

The real Boris Karloff—the man behind the Monster—is one of Hollywood's most charming characters. He is good-natured, kindly, loves cricket, and when he revisits England, makes a bee-line for the pantomime or a football match!

He is one of the few film stars who will admit quite frankly that luck has helped them to fame. Success has come to him in the prime of life. His maturity and the hard life which he has experienced have helped him to have a clear-cut viewpoint on his good fortune. Although he appreciates the comfort and happiness which his recent success has given him, he has in no way lost his sense of proportion and he has not been overwhelmed by his good fortune.

I have known him for over four years. We have met at consular receptions, at cricket, at the soccer and the rugby matches, at occasional gatherings of Hollywood's British colony and at tea now and then at the home of mutual friends.

At all times he has been most companionable, somewhat reserved and reticent, especially in matters concerning himself, but always ready to discuss topical subjects in a surprisingly liberal fashion.

Yet, Hollywood knew little about him. It was not that he was secretive. But you did not find him at gay parties and the smart functions.

The reason is simple. Boris Karloff loves his home, his garden, his dogs and family life, as he has established it with his equally charming wife. It was to his home that I went to talk to him about his life and the events which led to his being known on the screen as "Karloff."

Cold Water Canyon is a quiet section running north of Beverly Hills. A mile from the main road is a winding street called Bowmont Drive. It curls up the hillside and loses itself in a maze of oak trees. Near here is a rambling Mexican style of home, very hard to see from the road. Growing in wild abandon around it are masses of morning glory and honeysuckle.

The number was right. I parked my car. My reception was vociferous. Three frisking Bedlington terriers and two skittish Scotties barked furiously as I opened the gate. For a moment I hesitated. Despite friendly tail-wagging, five dogs at once are always cause for speculation. I didn't have much time to speculate, for, as soon as I was within the garden, an avalanche of canine friendliness swamped me.

"Hello! I didn't know the welcoming committee were out. Just a moment and I'll dispose of some of them," called out a tall, sinewy man in a rough tweed jacket, a sweater and grey flannel trousers. The dogs at once left me and dashed joyfully to their master.

I followed him on to the enclosed terrace, flooded with bright sunshine. At one end was a small bar. The light caught the warm tones of ruby and emerald-tinted bottles against the soft browns of the wood.

With some vintage sherry at hand, we talked. In rather slow, measured speech, choosing his words carefully, William Henry Pratt unfolded his story.

His voice is rich, deep and distinctively melodious, with occasionally a sad note. Distinguished and sculpturesque, his face indicates that he has had his share of hard knocks, tough times and more than ordinary troubles. The eyes are dark brown and very expressive. His eyebrows are heavy and black, in contrast to his silvered hair. He rarely smiles. When he does he smiles first with his eyes. Then they gleam

warmly and kindly. Otherwise they have a far-away, almost mysterious look in them.

You are at once impressed with this man's sincerity and directness. He expresses himself without fear of opinion. His attitude towards his own position is simple and unaffected.

"On November 23rd, 1887, I was born in Forest Hill Road, Dulwich. Here we lived until I was about five years old. I was the youngest of a fairly large family of eight sons and one daughter. As you can imagine, my brothers were always keeping me in my place, or what they considered was my place.

"I knew very little of my father, James Pratt, who had spent his life in the Indian Civil Service. As I was the youngest, mother rather spoiled me. We moved to Enfield when I was about seven. From that time on, I began to see less and less of my brothers. They seemed always to be abroad, either in India or China.

"There was always one or another of them home on leave. He saw me at my various stages of boyhood and adolescence. Each one would try to reform me during his six months on leave. There was always the general comment that I was going to the dogs and someone would have to do something about it.

"This brotherly benevolence became a trifle annoying. In time I got used to it and recognized that their intentions were sound. But I feel that I owe much to that interest. All men of substance and standing, they impressed me with a sense of rightness and the need for doing the right thing.

"It was intended that I also would go into the consular service. My schooling began at the Merchant Taylors' School, followed by Uppingham and, finally, King's College. At no time was I keen on this idea of a diplomatic career.

"An elder brother had been on the stage under the name of George Marlowe when I was about eight years old. He was the one I knew best when the others were abroad. He played with Fanny Ward at the old Strand Theatre in *The Royal Divorce*. Giving up this stage life, he went into the city as a partner in a Swedish firm of paper pulp merchants. Still the theatre interested him deeply. He coached clubs, assisted at the Enfield Amateur Dramatic Society. Each year he put on a show at the Enfield Cricket Club.

"His dramatic experience was really no encouragement for me. Despite the fact that George was an extraordinarily

handsome man, he never went very far on the stage, which was the reason he gave it up for a city job.

"But I tried to emulate him. There was a church play each Christmas at St. Mary Magdalene's for the parishioners' children. Then the Band of Hope put on an entertainment, and I was always in those things, giving everything in me, acting lustily and loudly. Curiously enough, my first part was the Demon King in *Cinderella.*

"While at Uppingham, from 1902 to 1906, I played the usual games. I was the enthusiastic rabbit, you know, at cricket and rugger. One thing I regret is that I did not satisfy my love of music. I sang in the choir and did two years of piano practice under pressure. If I had decided to work a little more at music, I should have had a great opportunity. The music master was a brilliant man. If any boy had any music in his soul, he would have brought it out."

Boris Karloff laughed as he added reflectively:

"Yes, I made a great mistake then, apart from no particular aptitude for music, in not taking advantage of that man's knowledge and patience.

"When I was 19 I matriculated and went to King's to read for the consular service. Frankly, I didn't have enough brains to do the job, and certainly I was not in the least interested. Although my brother George had been dead for a few years, the stage was my only interest. On every possible occasion I went to the theatre, read plays, and did everything I could to satisfy these dramatic yearnings.

"My brother's experience was held up to me by the elders of my family as the horrible example of what happens when you try to get on the stage. Forming a tribunal they pronounced:

"1. *That I could not possibly succeed because I did not have George's looks or his talents.*

"2. *That it would be complete folly for me to try it.*

"3. *Finally they would not countenance it!*

"They urged me to see that the dignity and stability of a consular career was vastly to be preferred to the insecurity and uncertainty of the stage. They were right. From 1910 to 1930 I really had a very thin time. Then Luck stepped in and, in prankish fashion, smiled on me.

"The seventh of May, 1909, I sailed from Liverpool, second class.

"The family had been informed that I intended to leave home. I felt I had to get away and work things out on my own. Fortunately, there were no brothers at home at the actual time of my departure. I don't remember that any

obstacles were placed in my way or that I had to overcome any great difficulties.

"I imagine that when I got on the ship, brotherly sighs of relief could be heard in various far-flung British outposts. There was no weeping and no distress. I was on my way. To what, I didn't exactly know.

"I chose Canada because just about that time, the Canadian Government was sending out an appeal for immigrants. I had no idea what Canada was like. It was all a fantastic and frightfully exciting adventure. There were some plans to go on to a farm in Ontario to learn farming, then to buy some virgin land and develop it by myself.

"How six weeks with an Irish farmer, son of a retired country gentleman, who had come over to Canada on a windjammer, could fit me for a life on the soil, I don't know. Still, that was the idea.

"I had £150 when I left home. From Ontario, where I lasted six months, I went on to Banff. The rugged beauty and impressive grandeur of the Rockies will always remain a deep memory. Banff appealed to me, but it was no use as a place to find a job. So I went on to Vancouver. With exactly a pound to my name, I arrived in this delightfully situated metropolis of the west and began to look for employment.

"There wasn't a hope of stage work. There was little doing in the theatre at that time and, in any case, managers were not interested in gangling youths with no experience.

"The dire necessity of eating was soon apparent. Men were wanted to dig a race track and a fair ground and the pay was one and threepence an hour.

"I reported for work without having had any breakfast as I didn't have the money to buy it. The first day was a long, dreary 10 hours of pick and shovel. My hands were blistered at the end of that day. By the end of the week they were merely calloused. For three days I lived on threepence a day because the arrangement, made by an astute foreman, was that we were to be paid on Saturday.

"The steak that I bought that Saturday night was the finest meal I have ever tasted.

"But I was convinced that ditch digging was not much fun. Walking on the street one day, Hugh Arthur, a friend of a brother of mine in China, spotted me. There was a boom in land at that time. He suggested that I should become a real estate salesman. Little better than a glorified

office-boy, I made some money and gave Hugh £2 occasionally towards buying a lot for me. This did not work so successfully and, when there were no immediate returns, I shovelled coal and did some more ditch digging. It was less of a hardship this time. Youth soon gets used to work, no matter how rigorous it may be.

"Late in December, 1910, I called at the Hotel Vancouver for some reason. A man passed through the lobby. His face seemed distinctly familiar to me. Upon inquiry, I found he was my brother, John, on his way from China to London. Sportingly he loaned me £20, enough to keep me going for a while in my planned attempts to get on the stage.

"Incidentally, I have never repaid that loan, nor have I the slightest intention of doing so!

"For months, I had made overtures to three Vancouver stock companies. There didn't seem a chance, not even a faint hope, of becoming an assistant to the assistant stage manager.

"In a rather despondent mood one evening, I glanced at a newspaper and saw an advertisement for a character actor for the Ray Brandon Players, of Kamloops, British Columbia. I applied for the job, using the name of Boris Karloff, which happened to be my mother's family name.

"Some time previously I had written to an agent in Seattle, pitching him the yarn that I was an experienced actor out in Canada for my health. I told him of the parts I'd played, actually parts in plays I had *seen*. He must have had a good laugh at my expense.

"A letter from him arrived when I was out on a survey party, telling me that I had been engaged to join the company at Kamloops at the princely salary of £6 a week.

"To Kamloops I went, feeling no slight trepidation at the prospect of my first professional stage work. I hadn't the foggiest idea of how to take stage direction. Rehearsal routine and make-up were both completely foreign to me.

"My first part was an old man of 60—Hoffman, the banker husband, in *The Devil*, by Molnar. At the end of the performance, as I was slinking away to some dark corner, the manager came towards me with a malevolent gleam in his eye. 'Karloff, you know darn well you've never acted before. Still, we like you and you'll stay with us at £4 a week.'

"For over a year we toured western Canada. Strange as it seems, I became fairly popular as a villain. Early in 1912 we were stranded in Regina. Everyone in the company, in-

cluding myself, of course, was absolutely flat broke. The situation was rotten and prospects were dismal.

"Maybe the finger of Fate was pointing at me. The day after the manager announced our complete lack of funds and inability to proceed, there was a terrific storm in Regina and I got a job as a labourer cleaning up the mess. A haulage concern, called The Dominion Express Company, needed men. Being fairly husky, I got temporary employment.

"Again a stroke of luck. The company sent me to the railway station to collect some crates of goods. As I crossed the tracks to the warehouse, someone threw an old copy of *The Billboard*, a theatrical journal, from a train window. Casually I picked it up and glanced at it. I saw an announcement that the Harry St. Clair Players, a repertory company, at Prince Albert, wanted a young leading man. I dashed off a letter of application post haste and, to my surprise, I received a reply a few days later asking me to join them in Prince Albert.

"We played in Prince Albert for nearly two years. Thanks to Harry St. Clair, who held back a certain proportion of my salary each week, I managed to save £50. This was enough to keep me going for a little while and I decided that I had now sufficient experience to try one of the bigger theatrical centres, and I chose Chicago, arriving there on October 13th, 1914. There was a frightful slump in the theatrical business at the time and I just couldn't get an engagement. Rather discouraged I went to the Brinkham Theatre in Minnesota. This was very dull, and I was very happy to rejoin Harry St. Clair."

Let it be mentioned that Boris Karloff tried extremely hard to get into the Army. He was rejected on account of heart murmur.

"Probably the finest experience you can get in the theatre is to be with one of these repertory companies. We did 106 different shows in 53 weeks. At last I was beginning to know something of my job.

"Realizing that success would come only by playing in the large cities, once more I went to Chicago. And once more I failed. Billie Bennett's *The Virginian* company was going on tour. They took me with them, and we toured through Minnesota, Iowa, Kansas, Colorado and Nevada, finally arriving in Los Angeles in December of 1917.

"Movies were in full swing then. I had no thought of getting into pictures. All my ideas were centred on a stage success. *The Virginian* tour did not last very long. The San

Pedro stock company had a series of engagements in Southern California for about six weeks. Through them I enjoyed my first wanderings in this part of the world. Then another repertory company went on a tour through the San Joaquin Valley and ended at San Francisco. Life became one stock company after another until an influenza epidemic ruined theatrical business in the west. My early training on the land stood me well. For two months I managed to earn a living pulling sacks of flour and loading lorries.

"My top salary on the stage up to now had never been more than £10 a week. Somehow, I managed to keep intact a tiny capital of £12, enabling me to have a little security and to venture afield in search of engagements. There was a vaudeville act arranged by Alfred Aldrich, a friend of mine, at San Jose. Its existence was brief indeed, and, when Aldrich tried to get a booking in Los Angeles, he had no success. Yet he sent for me to join him there. Wondering what it was all about, I joined him. He must have had some belief in me, for he loaned me sufficient money for food and lodging until I made the rounds of the only possible outlet, the film studios.

"I appeared before the camera for the first time in a crowd scene being directed by Frank Borzage at Universal City.

"Certainly no one there thought anything at all about me. Similarly, I didn't think very much of prospects in pictures. This was well proved, for that was the only day's work I managed to obtain. In despair, I gave up calling at the studio casting offices and went to San Francisco to the Bob Lawrence Company at the Majestic Theatre for a three months' session.

"Alfred Aldrich remained in Los Angeles. He scouted round, looking for possible opportunities for me. Reports from him were hopeful. Returning to Los Angeles, he introduced me to Al. MacQuarrie, an agent. Through him I worked a few days in Douglas Fairbanks' *His Majesty, the American*, as a guinea extra. The film magnates of those days did not wax enthusiastic about my particular type. But, while I was in the vicinity, I thought I might as well expose myself to any opening. I made the rounds of all the agencies. Late one afternoon I was entering the office of Mabel Condon. She saw me and enthused at once about my type. Thanks to her good offices, I obtained small bits and little parts in independent film productions.

"William Desmond and Blanche Sweet were the stars

in the Jesse Hampton picture in which I played. I can't remember the name of it. Then followed a part in *The Deadlier Sex* with Blanche Sweet. This time it was quite a decent role.

"Working in several pictures encouraged me to forget the stage for a while and remain working as long as I could in Hollywood.

"The typing system was used even in those days. Casting directors regarded me as a French-Canadian type and I worked in a number of pictures in that category. Richard Walter Tully's *Omar, the Tentmaker,* featured me prominently. Prospects were encouraging when there came a ghastly slump in production. I carried on as long as I could until my small capital was exhausted.

"Spring of 1923. I was flat broke. The future very doubtful. I was told I could get a job driving a truck for a concrete and cement firm in Los Angeles. The first thing to do was to learn to drive. I spent Sunday with a friend learning to drive his car. Monday morning I applied for the hob and got it. It was one of those simple tasks entailing the handling of a 17-ton truck.

"After learning the little idiosyncracies and whimsicalities of this, they told me to take out a speed lorry delivering 300 casks of putty. All I had to do—very simple when looking back—was to carry those 300 casks from the warehouse to the lorry, drive about 27 miles and then unload them. For this I received £1 a day. It wasn't really so bad except that I was a little older and, for the first few days, I ached in every muscle.

"The foreman, a kindly man named Charles Curtis, was very decent. He arranged matters so that I could take an occasional day to work in pictures and, at the same time, get a little relaxation. We carried on this way for over a year. Bert Lytell was starring in *Never the Twain Shall Meet* and I went to San Francisco on location. Apparently I couldn't have my cake and eat it, for this stay on location lost me my job handling putty.

"So I just had to stay in pictures. People were very kind, as I think they always have been to me. Through Robert Florey, who later became a director at Universal, I got a job in an Elaine Hammerstein film at the old F.B.O. studios. Here I worked in four pictures, culminating with a featured role in *Forbidden Cargo* with Evelyn Brent.

"The stage still enthralled me. A brilliant English actor and producer, Reginald Pole, gave me a good part in *The*

Idiot. He must have had astounding faith in my acting ability, as I had not read a line for almost seven years.

"Further opportunities to demonstrate my power as an actor came in San Francisco. In Los Angeles, at the old Egan Theatre, I had an important part in *Window Panes*."

Probably the strangest story of Karloff's life is his meeting with Lon Chaney. Chaney, the great master of make-up. Karloff, the man who has played many roles of the same type which made Chaney world-popular.

At first, soon after his tremendous success in *Frankenstein*, writers and reviewers spoke of Karloff as "a second Chaney" —a description which Boris was the first to dismiss.

"Lon Chaney was an individual," he said then, "and there will never be another man to take his place." He added modestly: "I hope that I, too, may make a place for myself—without being called Lon's successor, imitator, or 'second.' "

And as new role came after new role, Hollywood began to see that Boris was an individual—that he had his own talents, as interesting and powerful as Chaney's had been—but different.

And this very lesson of individuality was taught Karloff by Chaney himself, long before Boris' name meant anything to anyone beyond his own small circle of friends—the friends who knew of his desperate struggle to win success as an actor, and hoped it would come to him.

Lon Chaney was one of those friends—introduced to the aspiring small-part player by an old character man, Bill Taylor, who knew the ins and outs of the studios.

Thereafter the great star spoke to the bit player by name whenever they met. At the boxing matches especially, which Chaney never missed, he would always address a friendly greeting to Boris—standing outside the stadium on many nights, because he didn't have money enough for the admission price, and went to watch the more fortunate ones as they entered!

"Then one day just as I was leaving the studio," Karloff told me, "pretty discouraged at the way my 'career' was going, I heard a car honk behind me—and Lon Chaney gave me a ride home. We talked for over an hour about the picture business and my own chances of getting somewhere.

"He said to me: *'The secret of success in Hollywood lies in being different from anyone else.'* He cited his own career, his own unusual parts, as an example. *'Find something no one else can or will do—and they'll begin to take notice of*

you. Hollywood is full of competent actors. What the screen needs is individuality!' "

Boris Karloff is still guided by that advice! He does not complain, as actors sometimes do, of "being typed" in a certain kind of part.

"The most successful screen actors and actresses I've noticed, are limited to certain types. And after all, that's perfectly natural. A man can hope to do one certain thing better than anyone else—but he can't expect to do *everything* better than others. And pictures, as they are made to-day, demand 'the tops.' "

Chaney's advice in that talk gave Karloff courage to go on trying—and soon afterwards came a chance to play an important part in *The Criminal Code* on the stage in Los Angeles—an opportunity always leaped at by hopeful actors because Hollywood producers, directors and stars are in the audiences. It was a success, and, when it was made into a film, starring Walter Huston, Karloff played his original part of Galloway.

For Boris, too, this meant his first recogniton by Hollywood, and he was offered supporting roles, gangsters and villains and "heavies" in several good pictures.

The studios at once made full use of Boris Karloff. He worked fairly steadily. Outstanding during this period were *Cracked Nuts* with Wheeler and Woolsey, *Donovan's Kid* and *Public Defender* with Richard Dix, *Mad Genius* with John Barrymore, *I Like Your Nerve* with Douglas Fairbanks, Jun., *Smart Money* and *Five Star Final* with Edward G. Robinson.

Universal engaged Karloff for the "heavy" in *Graft* and were so impressed with his work that he was signed to play the monster in *Frankenstein* when the production was ready for filming.

"When I made my recent picture, *The Walking Dead*, directed by that grand fellow, Michael Curtiz, I discovered that it was my name and not so much my ability that helped me get my early chance in pictures.

"A few months before Mervyn LeRoy chose me for a double-faced newspaper reporter in *Five Star Final*, I was called in for an interview by Michael Curtiz. Seeing me, he at once hesitated, and then said: 'Well, I called you over, so I suppose I shall have to use you.'

"I didn't understand what he meant. He gave me the role of a Russian, however, in *The Mad Genius*, the John Barrymore picture he was directing for Warners.

"The other day I was talking to Mike and he asked me if I remembered working for him previously.

" 'The reason I called you in,' he explained, 'was because I thought you actually were a Russian. Your name is Karloff —it certainly sounds Russian. When you came in you seemed so anxious to get the job that I decided to let you have it.'

"Mervyn LeRoy saw my work in *The Mad Genius.* Even though he was impressed, I think it took great courage on his part to give me that fairly important role in *Five Star Final.*

"George E. Stone, one of my oldest friends, had a lot to do with my getting it. He literally worked for me, talked about me, made sure that the producers would not miss knowing about me."

Now, standing on the brink of success, Chaney's advice came into his mind again, and he tried to work out a definite *metier* of his own—a "type."

"And when I was offered the part of The Monster in *Frankenstein,* I knew that I'd found it at last. The part was what we call a natural," he added modestly. "Any actor who played it was destined for success."

Willingly he endured the hardships that came with the amazing role, the five hours it took to apply the grotesque make-up, the heavy disguise that endangered his health. And when the picture was released, as everyone knows, his judgment—and Lon Chaney's—was proved correct, Karloff was an overnight success—in a brand-new type of part—a part no one else had been willing, or clever enough, to try.

To-day, an established star, Boris can afford to vary his roles once in a while, though he will always, he insists, play one or two "make-up parts" every year. "They are my standbys," he says with comfortable assurance.

And the world owes the pleasures—the thrills and the goose-pimples—it receives from Boris Karloff's pictures to the good, inspiring advice Lon Chaney gave him during that fateful ride in the star's limousine so long ago.

During the filming of *The Bride of Frankenstein,* I went on to the set on two or three occasions to see the shooting and to chat with Boris Karloff.

What an extraordinary transformation was there! Here was this cultured, quiet-spoken Englishman changed into a terrifying monster by the use of skillfully applied make-up.

The monster towered more than seven feet in height. To achieve this, Karloff wore great wooden shoes, heavily padded inside. His built-up misshapen skull was sutured with gleaming metal clips. The pasty face was deformed and evil-

looking. The forehead bulged ominously. Forming a hinge for his head a silver rod pierced his neck. The clay-like eyelids were heavy and entirely devoid of lashes. On the neck and wrists were thin, livid scars, showing where the parts of his body had been joined. Walking with a peculiarly menacing and cumbersome gait, slowly and heavily dragging his feet across the floor, the monster was the personification of awe-inspiring evil.

An amusing contrast came each afternoon when the whole company stopped for tea. It was only then that you realized that this Thing was human, and you sympathized at once with Karloff as he tried to negotiate the cup towards his mouth.

Many of the scenes in this strange picture were sombre and forbidding. They added to the terrifying atmosphere created by the presence of the monster himself and the skilful lighting.

Karloff was fortunate in being a naturally strong man. The total weight of his make-up and costume was 67 lb. The enormous shoes he wore weighed 21 lb. each. Under his costume, heavy pads and bandages were placed to create the giant-like illusion.

At no time was there any complaint from the actor. With almost stoical fortitude, he carried on. Eight hours each day were required to apply his make-up; one hour to remove it at the end of the day's work. The heavy cosmetic mask covered him so completely that it became frightfully hot, and he lost almost two stone in weight.

His day's work is an extraordinary record. The publicity department kept a careful tally of his exact doings, for never before in the history of the screen has any man had to give up so much during a picture.

4:30 A.M.—The butler awakens him. He has a cold shower. Infra red ray treatment for a torn and dislocated hip, an injury which occurred during a fall in the first week of filming. Karloff did not take off any time for this. He merely had it bandaged and strapped and went on with his job.

5:10 A.M.—Toast and black coffee.

5:20 A.M.—The 15-mile drive to the studio.

5:50 A.M.—He begins to put on make-up with Jack Pierce, chief make-up man at Universal Studios.

Until noon they are still putting on the make-up of greyish green grease-paint, aluminum neck spikes, a built-up

false hair, blood wounds on the scalp, forehead, neck and wrists, burned hand, aluminum and steel braces for the arms, burnt and wrinkled facial and arm skin, made by using a special collodion.

12:30 P.M.—They begin to put on the heavy shoes, the pads for the legs and the body, and the superstructure, this increasing his height to more than seven feet.

1:30 P.M.—Some tea and a sandwich before Karloff begins to feel the intense heat of the great sun arcs on his skin, the pores of which are almost closed by the unusually heavy make-up.

2:00 P.M.—Begins work on the set. The strain of that formidable make-up is so great that, between scenes, he has to lie down and rest. This continues until 6:30 or 7 o'clock.

7:00 P.M.—The make-up is removed, assisted by two make-up men, using oils and acetic acid.

8:00 P.M.—A cold shower, tea and a light dinner, after which he drives home.

8:30 P.M.—Massage to assist the circulation in the legs and the arms, somewhat restricted during the day. Infra red ray treatment to relieve the pain in his injured side.

9:30 P.M.—To bed but not to sleep, for first he has to study the script for the next day's work.

This was his programme for weeks at a time.

So you can understand that sometimes it is no sinecure to be a film star, basking in the limelight of an admiring world.

Yet at no time did Boris Karloff protest. It was part of the day's work, part of the life of a character actor.

This grotesque make-up changed the entire contour of his face. It covered his eyes, neck, hands and arms. The spirit gum used drew his skin tightly and made his life uncomfortable and painful.

It was the nightly removal of the make-up which was so beastly, almost torturing in unpleasantness. Karloff himself did as much of it as he could, in order to lessen the pain as much as possible. To dissolve the spirit gum, they had to use on his entire face, including eyes, a stinging, biting fluid known as acetone. To prevent actual burning of the skin, this process had to be followed by a complete oiling and greasing.

Acetone is the liquid that women use to remove their nail polish. Consider this and you have some idea of the gentle process of removing heavy make-up.

When Karloff was making *The Bride of Frankenstein*, I met him at the Hollywood Cricket Club during one of his

rare week-ends away from the studio. He was not playing because he was still suffering from a dislocated hip.

Relaxing in the sunshine, Karloff was an entirely different being from the monster he portrays.

"I am genuinely glad to have had the chance to do the Monster," he said quietly, "although no one was more surprised than I when the film was so popular at the box-office. As a matter of fact, I love these horror parts, although I object to the word horror. These stories are bogy tales, fairy stories. I've had hundreds of letters from kiddies saying it is a shame I get killed so often in films. Actually, every letter received has been sympathetic, expressing genuine sorrow for me. I assume that the sympathy of an audience goes out to the Monster because it is at once recognized that here is a strange creature, utterly bewildered by his surroundings. When he kills his tormentors it is only because he has no other thought or motive beyond self-preservation.

"I remember, during the early days of the picture, that there were 10 small girls working in one of the sequences. These children were most friendly. They gathered round me, lifting my enormous shoes, pinching my padded legs and trying to find out just what the Monster really was.

"Youngsters are thrilled but not frightened by my fantastic get-up. It seems to be the adults who are scared."

At home Boris Karloff is the completely domesticated male. There is work to be done continually in the two acres of garden surrounding the hacienda. There are fruit trees by the dozen. Last year, the Karloffs sold 900 lb. of plums. Mrs. Karloff told me that they grow their own vegetables and flowers, and they have oranges, grapefruit, limes, lemons, peaches, apricots, plums and avocados during the season. They also have a poultry run and Karloff is proud of the fact that their Buff Orpingtons are good layers.

Katharine Hepburn used to live in this house. It is doubtful whether her tastes ran to such rural pursuits. Most of the trees, especially the tall hedges of laurels and eucalyptus, have been put in by Boris and his wife.

They live almost the ideal life in Southern California. The house itself is delightfully commodious. The rooms are cool and dark, very pleasant during the long, hot summer. As we walked round the grounds, Mrs. Karloff pointed out some of the pleasures of the garden. Growing outside the bedroom windows was night-blooming jasmine, exquisitely perfumed. Bordering the swimming pool were stately roses of 20 varieties.

"We could easily be self-supporting here and that is something to be considered in these changeable times," commented Karloff.

"The remarkable thing, living in the country as we do here, is the sense of being away from all things connected with films. We are 15 minutes from any studio, yet it is so completely in the country. The dogs love it as much as we do, even the little Bedlington, who is called Agnus Dei.

"I suppose one's ambition is economic freedom and running one's life unhampered and unhindered by worry of the future."

A reminiscent smile hovered over Karloff's face.

"I shall never forget those days of struggle and the great kindness of some of my landladies who would let my rent go months at a time.

"The accidents of chance have, without any doubt, played their part in my life. I realize that the luck element means so much to any man. In my own case, there are at least 100 men with better character experience, who know their acting business thoroughly, who might have had the same opportunity as I did. I got the break. They didn't. That's the story. But for a chapter of accidents, I'd be in the same position as I was in 1930.

"I know many character men, some of whom I played with in 1920. They were getting much more money than I was then, but within the past five or six years they have found the going extremely hard. Some are doing an occasional day's work as extras. That is about the end of one's hopes of getting anywhere in Hollywood. I drove a lorry for a year and a half to avoid taking the leap of signing up at the Central Casting Bureau.

"In many ways I'm very glad I did not get the break when I was thirty. I might not have had the sense to hold on to my good fortune. Luckily, it has come to me in the prime of my life, when I've had sufficient experience to know what to do.

"Probably one of the greatest things that happened for me was in Vancouver when I was 22 years old. Someone offered me a half interest in a goldmine for £100. I had the money. I asked the advice of a banker friend. He said, 'No.' That mine was subsequently sold for £3,000,000. But imagine what would have happened to me. It would have ruined me.

"Now we have outlined a financial programme, providing I remain in pictures for another five years, whereby we can

live here fairly comfortably on a small income. So as far as we're able, we try to prepare for the future."

Karloff was due to leave Hollywood within a few days, to make two films in England, and it was inevitable that we should talk about home.

It was then that he told me an amusing story about his trip home in 1933, when, after many years abroad, he resumed acquaintance with three of his brothers, who have long been high in the services of the British Government. One was Sir John Pratt, formerly in the diplomatic service in China, and now in charge of all Chinese affairs at the London Foreign Office; another was Mr. Justice E. M. Pratt, retired, formerly Judge of the High Court of Bombay, India; the third was F. G. Pratt, C.S.I., retired, formerly of the Executive Branch of the Indian Civil Service, a member of the Viceroy's staff and for a long time Governor of a province in India.

These three distinguished brothers were among the many guests at a reception given for Karloff during his visit to London. A leading magazine sent a photographer to secure pictures of some of the notables present, and, finally, the cameraman asked the actor to pose with his brothers.

"This was the moment I had been dreading," Karloff said. "I felt that they would consider it beneath their dignity and expected to be told in no uncertain terms that such a thing was impossible. But I hunted them up and put the proposition to them. 'I realize,' I said apologetically, 'that I make my living in rather a queer fashion, and I only bring this to your notice because the man is so insistent. I assure you that it is not an idea of my own, but—well, there is a photographer here who wants to take our pictures together.'

" 'Where is he?' " asked Sir John excitedly. 'Bring him in here and let's be photographed in front of this fireplace!' They were as pleased as three boys and, when the photographer had come in from the other room, they began to argue as to where each should stand. Finally, it was decided that we should line up according to age, with my brother John on one end and myself on the other. No sooner was the picture taken than all three brothers began to inquire how soon they could secure prints—and by this time I was in a positive glow of relief. A film actor had been received in the British diplomatic circles and had made good!

"I must tell you, too, of the loveliest thing that occurred in London during my visit. It was late on Friday that we arrived at Southampton. I was terribly excited, of course,

to be back home after 25 years. It was thrilling to be on English soil once more. I wanted to see London and to know all about the changes. I drove all over London with my brothers, and it gave me one of the greatest moments of my life.

"Then, with the Gleasons, I went to Drury Lane. My wife had arranged for a quiet evening, and she told no one that we were going to the theatre. Somehow people got to know. There was a tremendous crowd gathered round the entrance. As I got out of the cab, many of them shouted in a most friendly fashion: 'Welcome home, Mr. Karloff, welcome home.' They came around, some wanting autographs, some more simply to extend friendly greetings.

"A welcome to me! I was overcome almost to the point of tears. Then a man in the crowd came to the rescue. 'It's all right, Mr. Karloff, we'll wait until after the show. This is a good play. We don't want you to miss any of it. You go into the theatre with your party and we'll be waiting after the performance.'

"It was terribly touching to have extended to me those lovely sentiments and that great kindness and consideration, which came from the heart.

"They were waiting for me after the show. I was deeply impressed with their friendly good will, and I realized what a great thing, literally beyond price, is the friendship of the people. Somehow, I feel it could have happened only in London and was fully representative of the heart of its people, of my people.

"The meeting again with my brothers was quite different from what I anticipated. There is a little difference in my suddenly attaining fame, when my mature family had taken years to establish themselves in their respective diplomatic posts. But Jack immediately put me at ease by saying: 'It's simply grand and we're all delighted to see you come home in triumph.'

"I have often thought how absurd and lopsided it is that men like my brothers should spend their lives in the service of their country, and be comparatively unknown. Whereas I, because of a series of lucky accidents, have been granted fame and some fortune. Anything I have achieved in life in no way compares to anything they or the hundreds of men like them have done.

"The 25 years we had been apart made a difference. The strangeness had to wear off. We had to find the common touch. Then there came that lovely sense of well-being, of deep understanding and warm friendship.

"I shall always relish my trips to England. Another journey I want to make some day is through the little towns in Canada and the north-western part of the United States, where I played with repertory companies. Places really do have a bigger pull on your heart strings than people do.

"And the rest! To carry on and live life as well and fully as I can."

THE MAN BEHIND THE MONSTER

Forrest J Ackerman
Jack Taylor

JACK PIERCE

As Mary Shelley was the literary mother of the Frankenstein monster, so his filmic father was Hollywood make-up wizard Jack Pierce, deceased.

The fame and fortunes of Jack Pierce and Boris Karloff were so intimately intertwined during the burgeoning stages of Karloff's monsterhood that an obituary of Pierce inevitably was woven with many references to Karloff.

My complete tribute to Pierce—"Master Monster-Maker Mourned," 10 pages—was featured in the May 1969, 55th issue of FAMOUS MONSTERS OF FILMLAND. Re-edited for emphasis on the Karloff part of the relation to Pierce, my tribute to *two* great men appears here with the kind permission of the publisher, James Warren.

FRANKENSTEIN'S FATHER

He built a monster.

Frankenstein.

And on his creation's broad shoulders, Jack Pierce climbed to the top of the pedestal.

The Wolf Man.

The Mummy.

Ygor.

The Jungle Captive.

He made them the hard way, the old way, the original way that took half a day of tireless effort to transform, for instance, a mild, cultured Englishman named Boris Karloff into the most terrifying face seen on the screen since the late Lon Chaney had played Erik, the demented *Phantom* of the Opera.

That was in 1931.

On 19 July 1968, he died.

I believe he was born in Greece.

He was close to 80 when he passed away.

Passed away?

An unreal thing to say, for whenever FRANKENSTEIN and THE WOLF MAN and THE MUMMY and their sequels are revived, Jack Pierce will come alive and be remembered.

Applauded, even.

COLORFUL CAREER

If Jack Pierce's FRANKENSTEIN had been in color, or if you had been permitted a peek into the inner sanctum of Jack Pierce's make-up room when the picture was in progress, you would have seen— Well, here is what your bulging eyes would have beheld, as reported by a journalist of the time:

He was 7 feet tall.

His place of incarceration was the innermost make-up room of that same City of Make-Believe where the Hunchback of Notre Dame had growled, the Phantom of the Opera had sung his fatal role, where Dracula had sunk into his last 500-year-old coffin and the terrifying claws of the Cat had closed about the beautiful neck of the Canary— Universal City.

Prepared as I was, this terrifying man-made mountain, the grotesque shape, the abnormal features completely submerged the identity of Boris Karloff.

His lips were purplish-red, almost black.

The head was box-like, the top of it flat and the hair growing out like that of a Japanese doll.

The eyes were dead.

All the flesh showing was gray-green and blotchy and slashed all over with surgical stitches and clamps, where he was obviously put together, for Frankenstein's monster was put together, you remember, by the ambition-goaded young Dr. Frankenstein, according to the legend and the story by Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley. Here was a human life created by a human being in a scientific laboratory, and Karloff was that creation.

And JACK PIERCE was his creator.

Robert Bloch observed: "The general public seldom stopped to think about the make-up on Boris Karloff or Lon Chaney Jr. but I'm sure that to every reader of *Famous Monsters* his was a name to conjure with. If he was unknown to the average movie-goer, Jack Pierce was a Star,

and rightly so, to the avid fan of the horror picture. And among those fans he could certainly count Yours Truly. He was the greatest."

REST IN PEACE

Only 24 persons were at the funeral of Jack Pierce, one-fourth the number that I counted at the funeral of Bela Lugosi, a man he had made up as Ygor and as the Frankenstein monster himself. As Jack Taylor observed, "It was a sad, almost pathetic affair." Taylor, himself a make-up artist, after the funeral wrote a good deal about Jack Pierce. With Taylor's kind permission we herewith publish for your benefit a number of his remarks:

The mourners hardly filled a solid row of pews. A minister who had never met Jack P. Pierce, dean of Hollywood make-up artists, was bravely trying to speak of a man he had never met, but said little more than a few prayers and some kind words.

In the audience of 24 persons, only 3 were make-up artists. His union brothers sent flowers but most found it inconvenient to say farewell in person.

It might be said this was the usual funeral turnout for movie pioneers; those that remain have come to expect it. A brief blurb in The Times, *a precise, well-oiled service and a plot in Forest Lawn. Few have come to expect more than that.*

"Who was Jack Pierce?" someone asked an usher. The man mumbled he wasn't sure and the subject was dropped. Somehow the modern father of Frankenstein seemed to deserve a better answer.

The rebirth in 1931 of the double-domed freak, invented by Mary Shelley, was a Hollywood milestone for two men, Jack Pierce and Boris Karloff.

Prior to Universal's decision to film the classic horror tale, Pierce was an undistinguished make-up man and Karloff was enjoying almost bit player status among the casting departments of the various studios. His existence depended on landing small parts in major films or major parts in minor pictures.

At 42, Karloff's hand-to-mouth life made him question his chances of stardom. That year, however, a charm seemed suspended above his career. At a low point in his life he went to the Universal commissary for lunch and Jimmy Whale, one of the most respected directors of the day, asked him for a screen test. The part Whale was offering was that of the Frankenstein monster. The idea of wearing

make-up that would completely hide his natural features shattered Karloff's dreams of glory but he accepted the role figuring it was work and he needed the money.

Pierce was too busy during the day to experiment with monster make-up so he invited the actor to visit him at night when they could have the lab to themselves. No one expected more than a convincing face for a low-budget project ($250,000) but the men became fascinated with the monster.

NIGHT MONSTER

Like the literary predecessor, the modern Frankenstein was made at night, a bit at a time. Pierce and Karloff worked for weeks perfecting the face they hoped would be accepted for the role of the monster. The men worked under a kind of compulsion which drew their best capabilities.

Few things an actor was ever asked to wear matched the painful, fatiguing, clumsy putty face Pierce invented for Karloff. "It took from 4 to 6 hours a day to make me up," the star said. "I felt like an Egyptian mummy as Jack ladled the layers of make-up on me."

The hours Karloff spent in the make-up chair were as tiring as his acting on the stuffy soundstage. He would sit motionless by the hour while the heavy putty and grease-paint were applied, hardly daring to blink during the entire process.

Smoking was forbidden because much of his facial make-up was flammable. Lengths of cotton soaked in collodion were used to simulate veins. Karloff's regular height was built up to 7½ feet and his legs were trapped into braces that prevented him from bending his knees. Thus was Frankenstein's famous shuffling, halting walk created.

The movie was made during the heat of midsummer on stages that had never known air conditioning. To increase his bulk, a thick padded suit had been made for Karloff. Inside this tent of sweltering material the star would sweat profusely. The moisture made his make-up crumble and small bits of the gritty material constantly dropped into his eyes. The pain resulting from this was almost unbearable.

To ease his way, Pierce stood by the actor's elbow throughout the day, touching up the face and removing with eye-wash the grit from Karloff's eyes. The pair became friends because of their close relationship on the picture. Ever after, when he was interviewed, Karloff would lavish praise on Pierce for his genius in creating the monster's face with such convincing realism.

Through it all, neither Pierce nor Karloff even guessed

their future careers would revolve around this single achievement. From the moment the monster flashed on the screen, both men were "typecast" in the role of monster-maker and monster-actor. For Karloff it would be a blessing, for Pierce it would eventually force him into retirement.

The impressive profits of FRANKENSTEIN (12 million) induced Universal to make other horror films. After two more sequels to his original version, Karloff never again played the mythical monster of Mary Shelley's invention, except once on TV, but Pierce was called upon to devise other subhuman creatures to rush before the cameras in the place of Frankenstein.

THE MUMMY, a story of a 3,700-year-old corpse who returns to life, teamed Karloff and Pierce again. Pierce also invented make-up for the Wolf Man and numerous other evil monsters of mythology but none achieved the stature and acceptance of his first effort.

Then after 22 years at Universal Pierce was notified his services were no longer desired. The era on which his career had been founded was past. His techniques of using putty, burlap, collodion and Fuller's earth were too outdated. Foam rubber, plastics and other modern materials had replaced the older inferior products Pierce was used to working with.

Still his fame associated with Frankenstein continued to follow him. Once the host of a daytime television show asked him to demonstrate the application.

"Audiences turned to other fads in films and Jack found he had outlived his era. Studios didn't need him any more," said Verne Langdon, fellow make-up artist.

So, at age 79, Jack P. Pierce, the last great pioneer make-up man, died near the studio where he achieved his greatest triumphs, alone, except for his wife. Forgotten were his times of genius, those rare moments when an artist and audience discover each other and a classic film is born.

Hollywood bid farewell by staying away.

But if Hollywood had ceased to care, rest assured, Jack Pierce, that *Horrorwood* cared. Very deeply. It is the belief of the editor of this magazine that, had it somehow been possible by television, radio and newspaper to have informed filmonster fans several days in advance of the forthcoming funeral of Jack Pierce, there would have been an overflow crowd as there was at the death ceremonies for Peter Lorre. Many local fans said to me later, "Gee, I didn't know Jack Pierce had died."

And–BORIS KARLOFF didn't forget, Jack. Anybody should be proud to be remembered by Boris Karloff. At

your funeral the King of Monsters proved what we always knew—that he has a heart of gold: when he learned the sad news far away in his home in England, he arranged for an expression of his last respects to you in the form of a beautiful floral wreath.

No, Mrs. Pierce, honored widow of the late, great Jack, Boris Karloff did not forget your husband and his achievements.

HOMECOMING

W.S. Cobun Jr.

Clattering hoofs echo and reverberate, dashed to death against the grim walls, and the creaking, sable coach stops on dank flagstones. Muffled against bone-chilling fog, the hunched figure climbs painfully down from the dark conveyance. Across the courtyard, up the massive steps to the great oaken doors bound with iron he limps, and through them.

Inside the spidery gloom of the entrance hall a distant sound trickles to his ears. He turns a drawn face to the sound and, as in a dream, moves toward it, slowly, agonizingly.

The sound grows louder, more distinguishable and, around a corner—light! Glowing, faint, far-off. The sound is plainly heard now: people laughing and talking. Booming laughter. Soft, tinkling laughter. Pleasant sounds—and warmth!

The bent figure moves on and as he moves, strangely, he feels himself change. The stooped back slowly straightens. The gnarled hands unclench. The limp drops away and becomes a familiar lope. Pain drains from him like a mantle lifted from weary shoulders and vitality surges as, through the great arch, he enters the castle hall.

With great baton the major-domo thumps twice on the floor for attention, but his announcement is drowned by the cheers and applause of the crowd that surges to greet the new arrival. Smiling, he acknowledges the ovation and from the low balcony gazes over the upturned faces of old friends, old companions, old comrades.

The eager visages are easily recognizable:

Bombastic Lionel Atwill; stately Basil Rathbone; thin Ernest Thesiger; portly Charles Laughton; lovely Helen Chandler; homely Minerva Urecal; gaunt Conrad Veidt;

huge Paul Wegener; smiling all, greeting the new arrival with enthusiasm, waving.

Lightly he steps down the stairs to shake the outstretched hands, accept the embraces and good-natured claps on the back. They are all here—Bela Lugosi, Peter Lorre, George Zucco, Claude Rains, Rondo Hatton, Henry Daniell, Una O'Connor, Colin Clive, Dwight Frye, Edward Van Sloan, Carole Landis, Connie Bennett, Roland Young.

"Pierce, my old friend! James Whale!"

And, with a mischievous look in her eye, a young lady steps forward, deferentially introduces herself. "I want to thank you for keeping me famous all these years—on the other side. We've never met—my name [curtseying] is Mary Shelley." And she leads him to his place, there, before the great fireplace. With easy grace he assumes it and, as his companions gather 'round in welcome, benignly accepts their homage. The monarch has come home to repose. His willing subjects' wait is over. For *them* happiness is boundless.

MEAL WITH A MONSTER

William F. Nolan

(Ed. note: Mr. Nolan is the co-author of LOGAN'S RUN, the forthcoming multimillion dollar 21st Century chase film to be produced by George Pal; anthologist of *The Pseudo-People* and numerous other collections, some of his own work in the sci-fi field having been paperbacked under the title *Impact-20*; and he holds the unique distinction of being Terrestrial Chronicler #1 of the Martian Chronicler, his life-long friend Ray Bradbury. Nolan has been published in such diverse publications as *Playboy* and *Famous Monsters*. His interview herewith is from the latter publication and was first published in its April 1963 number.)

It *should* have been raining—if not a downpour, then a mizzling, foggy rain at the very least. The sky should have been riven by ominous lightning as I hurriedly mounted the steps of the Villa Frascati on Hollywood's Sunset Strip for my appointment with Doctor Frankenstein's creation, with the cold-eyed man-devil, whose massive, monolithic name weighs like iron on the tongue: KARLOFF. In justice, the weather should have matched this frightful name—yet the buttery California sun flared as serenely as ever above my

head as I moved across the outdoor patio toward my destiny.

I entered the door hushing closed behind me. Ah, this was more fitting: a castle gloom, a menacing semi-darkness, which promised evil. A tall figure materialized from this gloom, and I instinctively steeled myself. A deep-toned voice I immediately recognized from half-a-hundred horror films said: "It seems that the last of our party has arrived."

THE SHOCK OF MEETING

Boris Karloff stepped into clear view, and it was shocking to observe his neat, razor-pressed gray business suit, his carefully-combed white hair, his affable smile. No monster this; no shambling figure from a cinema nightmare—simply a distinguished British gentleman intent on shaking the hand of a late arrival.

Waiting was Doug Benton, the ex-associate producer of *Thriller*, the TV series in which Karloff had starred as host. A trio of noted fantasy/horror writers, Robert Bloch, Charles Beaumont and Richard Matheson, were also in our party. Ruth Matheson, Dick's attractive wife, completed the group —and we were all duly seated at a large table on the terrace, Karloff taking the chair next to mine.

The conversation, during that meal at the Villa Frascati, was fragmented and disorganized, in the manner of all such casual luncheon talk—but I soon found that Karloff was an articulate and fascinating individual with a gentle sense of humor, a far cry indeed from the brute creature he had so unforgettably portrayed in FRANKENSTEIN some 30 long years ago.

THE SIXTY-FEAR DOLLAR QUESTION

"Aren't you annoyed when people still tend to identify you with Frankenstein's monster?" I asked.

"Heavens, no!" said Karloff. "I owe my entire career to the old boy. I might still be driving a lorry in London had it not been my very good fortune to be given a chance at that role. You know, I was 45 when I did the part back in 1931—and nobody had ever heard of me. You couldn't exactly say that I was a promising young actor at that age!"

As I looked at him, listening to his measured British voice, it was difficult to realize that Boris Karloff was 75 years old, that he had been acting in motion pictures since 1919 and on the stage since 1910! I mentally reviewed some facts about him: In Hollywood, he drew scant notice in many minor films—from TARZAN AND THE GOLDEN LION, a 1927 silent, to THE MAD GENIUS, with John Barrymore,

in 1931. But when Bela Lugosi spurned an offer to portray the mute creature in FRANKENSTEIN this role was given to Karloff, who played the monster again in two sequels. His conception was brilliant and moving; he became a star at 45!

MR. MONSTER

Karloff earned his status as the screen's #1 practitioner of horror in such classics as THE MUMMY, THE MASK OF FU MANCHU, BEDLAM, THE WALKING DEAD, THE GHOUL, THE INVISIBLE RAY, BLACK FRIDAY, THE MAN THEY COULD NOT HANG, THE BODY SNATCHER, THE OLD DARK HOUSE, ISLE OF THE DEAD, THE TOWER OF LONDON and dozens more. Karloff raved through hell-dark hallways; he glared from castle walls; he transplanted brains in laboratories sizzling with man-made lightning; he terrified pure-hearted maidens and defied the hangman's noose. He was strangler, crazed doctor, evil Oriental, ax-wielding executioner, grave-wrapped mummy, fiend and madman; he was Evil incarnate. But never had he surpassed his incredible performance as Dr. Frankenstein's lumbering, scarred creation, with the slitted mouth, the terrible lizard-eyes, deep-sunk under their projecting ledge of bone, the bolted neck, the scar-sewn wrists. . . . To generations of awed movie-goers, Karloff would always be "The Monster."

A MONSTER'S SECRETS

We talked about the legendary job of make-up which Jack Pierce had perfected for the role.

"It *was* remarkable," agreed Karloff, who had worked with the Universal make-up artist in creating the illusion. "Part of the reason for its frightening realism was the look of *pores* in the skin. Jack achieved this by a special technique in which he carefully built the make-up from layers of cheesecloth. When he was done you couldn't tell where my real face ended and the Monster's began. Took him 4 hours each day just to get me ready for the camera."

I asked Karloff about the recent *Route 66* TV show in which he again became the Monster for the first time in 25 years. Was the make-up the same?

"Not at all," he sighed. "It was a quick job, with no time to do the thing properly. In that show the Monster was just a distant cousin to the original—which was a pity." He said this with genuine sadness, and it was not hard to be-

lieve that Karloff now considered the Frankenstein monster as one considers a long-time friend; affection and respect were in his voice.

LADY AND THE MONSTER

Ruth Matheson dipped into her purse to hand Karloff a photograph. It showed a very realistic replica of the Frankenstein creature with Matheson's 4 children crowded all around it in the style of a family portrait. The smallest girl held the creature's cold, waxen hand.

"Charming!" smiled Karloff.

"They all love the Monster," said Ruth. "We had this taken at the movieland Wax Museum."

"Looks just like the old fellow," nodded Karloff. He paused, then went on. "Amazing thing about children. They have compassion for the poor brute. They understood his need to communicate. The children have always pitied him and it's been this way all over the world whenever the original film is shown."

Q&A WITH BK

Beaumont wanted to know why Karloff had deserted the Monster after repeating the role in 2 of the sequels.

"I realized that the quality of the initial conception was rapidly disappearing," he replied. "When they began to play the creature for comedy the spell was broken. I didn't want to go on to corrupt the role."

"Eventually they even had Abbott and Costello meeting the Monster," added Matheson. "Remember?"

Karloff's eyes flashed with anger. "*Indeed* I do!" he said. Further comment was unnecessary.

MACABRE CLASSIC

Over refreshments, we discussed some of Karloff's other films, and he agreed with us that THE BODY SNATCHER had been one of his best. In this epic of grue, based on a classic story by Robert Louis Stevenson, Boris played a fiendish grave robber who cheerfully supplied fresh cadavers for medical dissection—and who, in turn, became a dissected corpse at the picture's end. In the climactic final scene, during a fierce thunder storm, he came back to life (an old trick of Karloff's) to destroy his murderer.

"You looked horrible in that scene," I said. "Your whole body seemed to be covered with a kind of white phosphorescence. Did they spray something on you?"

Karloff chuckled, nodding.

"What was it?"

"I really can't recall," Boris confessed, "but you can be sure that it was something *foul.*"

MAN OF SURPRISES

After dessert, Karloff dug out his pipe and raised his shaggy brows questioningly at Ruth. "Might I be permitted to smoke?"

"By all means," she replied.

I watched Karloff fire up his pipe and thought how surprised his fans would be to discover that this dark fiend of filmdom was a man of old-world charm and careful manners who would not even smoke without the permission of a lady.

"I dote on London," said Boris, leaning back in his chair and exhaling a bluegray pipe cloud. "It's a theater town. Something going on all the time on the London stage."

I recalled that Karloff had played Captain Hook in the Broadway version of PETER PAN. And that he had been a sensation as the wicked Jonathan in ARSENIC AND OLD LACE.

"I did 1400 performances of LACE on Broadway," he told us. "A live audience is marvelous for any actor."

"But didn't you get stale, or simply bored, doing that same play for so many nights?" I asked him.

"Never!" declared Boris emphatically. "Each night offers its own challenge. I even went on tour with that one."

"I recall a couple of horror anthologies published under your name," I said. "Did you actually edit those—or just allow your name to be used?"

"No, I selected all the material myself," he replied. "I was on the road with ARSENIC AND OLD LACE when I compiled the last big book, "And the Darkness Falls," which came out after the war in '46. The publishers sent me boxes of books while we moved from town to town on the tour—and I would read through a volume and select a story to go into my collection. It was quite a task but great fun. I think we raised a few goose bumps with that book!"

HIS CURRENT ROLE

Karloff discussed his latest film, THE RAVEN, in which he is starring with Vincent Price and Peter Lorre for American-International.

"Didn't you make a film under that same Poe title back in 1935?" asked Bob Bloch.

Karloff smiled broadly. "This bloody bugger knows more

about me than I know about myself," he said, one hand on Bloch's shoulder. "He even remembered me in a frightful thing I did for the silents in the twenties—THE NICKEL-HOPPER."

Bloch persisted. "What about THE RAVEN?"

"Yes, yes, I did the first one 27 years ago," said Boris. "But it bears no resemblance to Mr. Matheson's new version."

Matheson grinned. "I turned it into a kind of horror comedy," he said. "Lorre becomes a fat raven, with feathers."

Karloff laughed, recollecting the scene. "He looked frightfully funny, like a chubby little black bird. Delighted the whole crew."

"Did you enjoy doing this one?" I asked.

"Actually, I enjoy most of my films, and this was no exception," he said. "One catch, however, I was told by Roger Corman, our director, that I must wear this long velvet cape, an immense garment which seemed to weigh a ton. After dragging the bloody thing around behind for a day or two on the set I approached Mr. Corman and suggested, in my most gracious fashion, that the character I played would look much more sinister and effective *without* the cape. But Roger caught on; he knew why I wanted to get rid of the thing. He just looked at me and said: 'Wear the cape, Boris.' So, that was that."

Karloff admitted that he had turned down a re-make of THE OLD DARK HOUSE, then being filmed in England, because it deviated too acutely from the original picture.

"You made that one back in '32," Bloch added.

"Right," nodded Karloff, puffing steadily on his pipe. "It was from the novel by J. B. Priestley, and I played the fiendish butler who was a mute. I murdered a goodly number of innocent souls during the course of the film as I recall."

"That one had a great cast," said Beaumont.

"Super," agreed Boris. "Laughton was in it. So was Ray Massey. The new version they showed me in London was simply not to my liking. I sent back the script. Wanted no part in it. After all, I've been in the acting profession for more than half a century. High time to pick and choose my vehicles. You know—" He shook his head. "—I've been in some rather *awful* pictures, switching brains back and forth as mad scientists and what not. When you play a mad scientist you cannot achieve much in the way of subtlety. Still,

over the years, I've had a lot of fun scaring people. I wouldn't trade jobs with anybody!"

LITTLE BLACK LIES

Karloff finished his drink and we all prepared to leave. Ruth looked crestfallen. "What am I going to tell my children?" she asked in a distressed tone. "They *knew* I was going to have lunch with Boris Karloff. I can't bear to tell them the truth about you—that you're really just a charming, lovable gentleman."

Karloff looked pleased at this description, though amused. Then he furrowed his brow and made a suggestion.

"Why not tell them I *glared* at you all through the meal?" he said. "Tell them I drank only fresh blood. Perhaps that would help."

Beaumont joined in. "I plan to tell *my* children that you ordered a baby, well done."

"No, no," Karloff smiled wickedly. "*Under*-done. It's much nastier."

FAREWELL TO THE MASTER

As we walked down the steps to Sunset Boulevard, I offered to drive Boris back to his hotel.

"Thanks all the same, but it's just up the way a bit," he replied. "I'll enjoy the stroll. Good for the digestion."

He shook hands with each of us, adding: "It's been a pleasure," in his slow British accent. We assured him that the pleasure had been ours.

I caught my last sight of him as I drove back to Hollywood, along Sunset. The sun was still shining. Although I thought I saw a wisp of dark cloud hovering over Karloff's head. But it was probably smog. He turned to wave, then moved on toward his hotel, a gaunt yet still-graceful figure, walking with his famous limp which is known throughout the world.

The Monster was going home.

TARGET: KARLOFF

Kevin Thomas

Mr. Thomas is a film critic and interviewer for the Los Angeles Times. *The following article is condensed from one several times its length which he did two years ago on one of Karloff's last directors, Peter Bogdanovich.*

The chauffeur-driven limousine pulled up to the drive-in box office. Tuxedo-clad Boris Karloff leaned out the rear window and asked to speak with the manager.

Although the lights and cameras made clear that he was acting, the patrons of the Reseda Drive-In, long accustomed to seeing him on the screen, were no less startled to find him in such an unlikely setting. Indeed, it was the first time in his life that Boris Karloff had ever been at a drive-in—in person.

And when it came time to complete the climax of his latest film, TARGETS, inside the crowded outdoor theater he soon took the play away from the movie that was being shown. ("Is he very famous, Mommy?" asked a little girl who was assured he was.)

TARGETS, a story of contemporary terror, marks the movie debut of writer Peter Bogdanovich. At 26 Bogdanovich is 53 years younger than Karloff (who is also his co-star) but has already established himself as one of the most influential critics and commentators on films in the country.

"TARGETS contrasts two kinds of horror, the kind represented by Boris Karloff and the senseless kind so prevalent today—a man walks in a beauty shop and kills six people or climbs a tower and starts sniping away," explains Bogdanovich. About two months have passed since that cold long night at the drive-in. The indefatigable Karloff has gone off to England to make a couple of movies and Bogdanovich, who came to Hollywood from New York three years ago, is in the midst of post-production on the picture.

In a real sense TARGETS is a family affair. Peter's wife, Polly Platt, designed the sets and costumes for the film and also gets screen credit as co-author of the script. And one day in an old Santa Monica Blvd. studio Karloff and Bogdanovich could be seen rehearsing in an elegant hotel suite while on the adjacent night club set their respective wives, hammers and tacks in hand, upholstered banquettes.

"In the past people were killed usually by strangulation or by a knife. Now a machine does it for you. The horror of modern killing is that you can kill somebody and not get blood on you—not be physically stained," observes Bogdanovich, who got the opportunity to make his film with the one condition that it be a horror story tailored to Boris Karloff.

"With Boris I have tried to exploit his screen character. Basically, he plays himself, an actor famous for doing horror parts. That's what's so wonderful about stars, especially

Bogart. You don't have to write characters for them, you just enlarge upon some aspect of their personality."

DR. PSYCHO AND MR. STEIN

Robert Bloch

(Ed. Note: In the January 1962 issue of *Rogue* magazine, in a feature department known as *Basic Bloch*, the following interview was published. Prefacing it were these remarks by the editor: " 'A monster's life is not a happy one,' said the Monster, and leered at me with a Most Menacing leer." So reports columnist Robert Bloch, who is no stranger to horror fiction, having fathered many a Thriller-diller—including that champion chiller "Psycho."—End of *Rogue* introduction.

Between 1962 and 1968, Robert Bloch had numerous occasions to meet Boris Karloff, both in Hollywood and London, and a warm friendship grew up between these two giants in their craft who shared the art of manufacturing frightmares while in private life being as malevolent as a couple of toasted marshmallows.)

"Horror," said Boris Karloff, "is a nasty word."

We were resting on the patio before the swimming pool at the home of William Frye, producer of the television show, *Thriller*, and a gala cocktail party was going on in the background. The affair was in honor of Mr. Karloff who serves as host on the program.

The sun was setting over Coldwater Canyon, and its red reflection illumined the sinister profile of the world's most famous monster.

"Horror," he repeated. "I wish the movies had never found the label!"

I did a double-take. "But this is heresy!" I said. "It's like—"

"No such thing," Karloff concluded for me, biting down on his pipe-stem. "Think about it for a moment. There's nothing pleasant, nothing appealing, about the word, 'horror.' It doesn't promise entertainment.

"You and I, each in our own way, have devoted a career to providing chills, shocks, shudders. But we've done so only to amuse—to fulfill the same function as the time-honored teller of ghost-stories who offers a few cold shivers to his

udience in front of a warm fireplace on a winter's evening. No harm in that, surely. But I'll be blasted if either of us ever deliberately set out to *horrify* anyone. All this violence and brutality today, shown against a 'realistic' background —now that's downright horrible!"

"What about FRANKENSTEIN?" I asked. "Don't you call that a horror movie?"

"Certainly not! Weird—supernatural—but essentially and obviously a fable. I played the Monster three times, then refused to continue in the role, because the concept was being cheapened, and I got out. The happiest role of my life was that of Jonathan Brewster, in *Arsenic And Old Lace*—the man who looked like that fiend, Boris Karloff."

"Your biggest thrill?" I prompted.

The distinguished-looking, soft-spoken gentleman (and that's what he becomes, the moment he smiles) raised his eyebrows.

"My biggest thrill came during the Twenties." he said, candidly. "That's when I was promoted from $5-a-day movie extra to the exalted realm of the $7.50-a-day movie extra."

And we began to reminisce.

I reminded him of a bit he'd played opposite Mabel Normand in a long-forgotten film, "The Nickel-Hopper."

"Good heavens!" he laughed. "Don't tell me you saw *that?*"

Right then and there, Karloff separated himself from 90% of the thespians in Hollywood. Most of them are in no mood to laugh when reminded of minor roles and old times.

But Karloff and I went on to reminisce about his adventures and misadventures in such silent epics as TARZAN AND THE GOLDEN LION and THE DEVIL'S CHAPLAIN. He told me of the fifteen-episode cliffhanger serials he shot in fifteen days and of his struggles when the talkies came.

"Then came FRANKENSTEIN and fame," I hazarded.

He grinned wryly. "Then came FRANKENSTEIN and hard work," he amended. "A monster's life is not a happy one."

It took hours to apply and remove his torturing make-up for the role. If the rest of the cast assembled for shooting at eight, Karloff was at the studio at five A.M. to do his make-up.

"When I made THE MUMMY, it was another four-hour make-up job," he told me.

Those were the years of the great monster roles which earned Boris Karloff a reputation rivalled only by that of

the late Lon Chaney Sr. "But it wasn't horror," he insists. "Nor was it unintentionally horrible stuff, like—"

Here discretion prevailed, but we both knew what he was talking about; the dreary flood of cheap films, atrocious burlesques and outrageously gruesome quickies which downgraded the entire field.

"Isn't it strange?" he mused. "Thirty years after playing *the* monster for Universal, I find myself back on the same lot, as host for *Thriller*. In a way, it's like coming home again."

The sun was down now, and so was the liquor in my glass. We wandered inside the house, and I thought about all the scowling face-makers, all the putty-nosed nonentities, all the imitators who had come and gone during the generation spanning Karloff's career as Number One Menace. I thought about what he'd said concerning the difference between senseless horror and true entertainment. And I remembered his remark: "A monster's life is not a happy one."

Then I looked at him, surrounded by a score or more of bright young actors, actresses, executives and creative talents, enjoying the acclaim of a man who had reached a new peak in his career. And I shook my head.

You don't have to worry about Boris Karloff. He's the happiest monster in the world.

THE KING HAS ANSWERED PRINCE SIRKI'S CALL

Forrest J Ackerman

From the pages of the "filmonster fanzine," *Photon.*

An airmail special delivery has just reached me (7 Feb. 69) from Mark Frank. PHOTON'S editor asks me: "Would you, perhaps, write a small tribute to Karloff for PHOTON?"

No, I will not write a small tribute to Karloff for PHOTON.

Or for any other publication.

I wrote about 1200 words for *Science Fiction Times.*

I wrote about 4000 words for the *Los Angeles Times.*

So what I'm saying to you readers of PHOTON is that, no, I won't write something brief about Boris Karloff, I will only write something long, as long as time allows.

This will have to be roughly edited first-draft—I have no time to revise it—and you must understand that I am con-

stantly interrupted by the phone while I am trying to write. The number of phone calls and letters to me about Karloff in the past few days have been extraordinary.

Gary Dorst, a friend I made on that cross-country tour some years ago—that 8700-mile 5-week drive I took to meet filmonster fans—was the first to call me about Karloff's death, all the way from Madison, Wisc. Later on the first day, I recall talking with Donald Reed, Bill Warren, Charlie Nuetzel, Robert Bloch—

Last year I had arranged for Fritz Lang and Boris Karloff to meet at a dinner party at the Blochs'. It was Fritz Lang, who having been up early and caught the flash TV, called Bob and broke the bad news to him.

Leading off the Letter Dept. in *Famous Monsters* #55 you will see a photo of a local (LA) reader, Eugene Ellis. His mother gives me my mail at the post office most every morning. It was she who, at twelve minutes of 9 on Black Monday, Feb. 3, handed me one of the greatest jolts of my life, along with my mail. "Well, I guess you lost a good friend of yours," she said.

"Who—?" I had utterly no premonition who she was talking about.

When she said who, the world dropped out from under me. Suddenly I realized it was all over: our (all of us) dream of an Academy recognition for him . . . of his footprints and handprints and signature preserved for posterity along with Fairbanks and Pickford, Gable and Monroe and the other greats of cinema history . . . of 4 or 5 more pictures he was expected to make in '69 . . . (He never did THE DARK.)

The dark. Ah, yes, "And the Darkness Falls."

The world grows dimmer for an oldtimer like me. I was alive in the days of HGWells—I saw the abhorrent headline that said the World Brain was dead. I had to put up with the fact that my childhood idol, Edgar Rice Burroughs, died. I still recall the voice of the late E. Everett Evans, science fiction author, coming over the phone and telling me that "Jolie"—the immortal Jolson—had just died. I wept inside at the passing of Frank R. Paul and of Hugo Gernsback.

But Boris Karloff—!

It had never occurred to me that, after his death, so many people would approach me like I were a special friend of his or a member of his family. I have said repeatedly that "I knew Bela Lugosi during the last 3 years of his life . . . he was in my home . . . etc." I would say that

he considered me a friend. But as many times as I met Boris Karloff–let me stop now to try and remember and count them: 1 . . . 2 . . . 3 . . . 4 . . . 10 times in all, that I can recall–I never felt quite certain that he knew who I was. I always felt it necessary to say my name, connect myself with *Famous Monsters*. Even after I scripted the Decca record for him–"An Evening with Boris Karloff and His Friends"–and was present at the recording session (a whole story in itself) I was never too sure that he realized who I was. Only once, the last time I ever saw him on the set, I guess, of the final picture he ever made, the as-yet-unreleased INCREDIBLE INVASION–did he make some gesture or say something to me that made me feel he recognized me.

I *wish* I could boast that Boris Karloff and I were friends but Robert Bloch is such a one who can claim that privilege.

I could go on like this for pages, if time permitted, but I regret it doesn't. Within 24 hours after Karloff's passing I accepted an enormous challenge–to produce a 60,000 word fully illustrated Memorial pocketbook about him inside 10 days. (With all else I have to do!) I said yes without hesitation–but the publisher had second thoughts and the project died aborning. It may not be totally dead–I may try to stir up interest elsewhere. TIME is the enemy–I have so little of it. Third week in March I am flying off to Rio de Janeiro for their 2nd International Film Festival in which they are devoting a week to a retrospective on sci-fi films. Kubrick and Clarke are invited there for a Black Monolith award. Van Vogt. Philip José Farmer. Theodore Sturgeon. Others. I have written, urging the committee to dedicate the s.f. portion of the Festival to Boris Karloff's memory, show THE BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN and invite Elsa Lanchester to eulogize Karloff.

The Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society is voting Karloff a posthumous honorary membership.

At the 7th Annual Banquet of the Count Dracula Society there will be an empty chair in honor of our departed hero as his good friend Robert Bloch accepts the Special Award on his behalf for his 40-years' contribution to the field of Gothic films.

I have written on beyond my time. And with the sinking feeling that I have put down all kinds of words . . . random thoughts . . . streamcon writing . . . without saying nearly enough about how I personally felt about Boris Karloff.

I felt about him like–

To me he was–

Good God. I had just turned 16 when I saw him for the first time. Indelible impression of FRANKENSTEIN. Then THE OLD DARK HOUSE. THE MUMMY when it was brand new. THE INVISIBLE RAY. On and on. You name them—you know them, most of you, but mainly from TV, and in a world *flooded* with fantasy. It can't be the same as seeing them when they were brand new and a scarce article.

Back to Karloff. In the end, blasphemous as it sounds to my own ears, I probably liked him more than Lon Chaney Sr. For one thing, he *did* more. Not Lon Chaney's fault, of course, that he was cut down nearly 30 years earlier than Karloff. Had he lived longer, Chaney undoubtedly would have created scores of further characters. We can only speculate as to whether *he* might not have played the Wolf Man role so intimately associated with his son; might not have been Count Mora, instead of Bela Lugosi, in the semi-remake of LONDON AFTER MIDNIGHT; might— But I am not here to speculate about the fate of Lon Chaney in a parallel world where he did *not* die in 1930.

Karloff was King, the Master, the Greatest, the Superstar of imagi-movies, whether they were of science or the super-natural, monsters or mayhem, terror or—the word for which he had a genuine distaste—horror.

I think from his 75th year on I began to feel acutely conscious of what a favor he was doing us, his ardent admirers, by continuing to act. If you had seen him in a wheelchair when he was pushing himself through his 4 final films in 5 weeks, never far from an oxygen tank, it would have (assuming you're anything like me) broken your heart. But nobody was forcing him to do it—he didn't need the money—he wanted to die with his boots on because the world still wanted him.

Winchell has just quit at 72. Don't get me wrong—many people are quick to jump on me for having an inflated ego —I don't equate myself with Winchell. I'm just saying he just quit at 72 but if I'm still at my typewriter when I'm 81 the example of Boris Karloff will have a lot to do with it.

He was more than human, and if God weren't dead, and I wasn't an atheist to begin with, I'd say "God bless Boris Karloff."

I believe I'll say it anyway.

"YES, BUT COULD HE ACT?"

R. Michael Rosen

Before loyal Karloff fans begin pinning pins in my effigy for daring to question Boris Karloff's acting ability, let me add that the question is not wholly my own. Respected critics and fans alike have expressed the opinion that Karloff often attitudinalized rather than acted—and occasionally was even downright sloppy or indifferent!

In her review of THE RAVEN, which appeared in the New York *Herald Tsibune*, 5 July 1935, critic Marguerite Tazelaar commented:

> "Mr. Karloff, one cannot help musing after following his distorted features through still another picture, must possess bold courage and great resistance to human vanity, to continue having his face remodeled so hideously at each new whim of the film executives . . .
>
> "So hypnotic are these incognitos that this writer, for one, has never been able to discover whether Mr. Karloff can act or not. . . . It must be admitted that Karloff wears his masks with dignity, even though they do not create genuine emotion in the breathless breasts of his spectators."

Critic Tazelaar did not say outright that Karloff was merely a stereotype rather than an actor but insisted that she could not tell one way or the other after seeing Karloff's output up till 1935—which includes his best films. Other critics of the same era often declined to comment on Karloff's acting in their reviews, referring to him merely as an instrument of some scriptwriter's gruesome imagination.

Such viewpoints, of course, are limited to the perspective of 1935. But even Karloff's staunch supporters occasionally admit that up until the late forties Karloff always gave a good account of himself but that after that often simply walked through a role which he didn't particularly respect. One must confess that Karloff put up only token effort in such limp films as VOODOO ISLAND or FRANKENSTEIN —1970, pictures that Karloff must have recognized as having neither cinematic quality nor an opportunity for him to display anything creative One can sympathize with him for being stuck in such listless roles but one must also remember that Karloff did not have to accept these parts, and that once he did, it was implied that he was obligated to giving

100% effort. An actor, if conscientious, does not allow himself the luxury of deciding whether or not a role is worthy of him once he has decided to play it.

These reflections bring up three questions. First, was Karloff in his heydey merely a character actor, playing stereotypes and disguising a lack of ability beneath pounds of make-up?

Second, can an actor who gives a slovenly performance in a role he doesn't care much for ever be a great actor, and can one who even allows himself to make such a decision be considered a Thespian in the finest sense of the word?

And third, can an actor who respects himself, his talent and his profession accept such an inferior role without disgracing himself?

The Karloff supporters answer these questions with authority.

Critic Marguerite Tazelaar does not appear to have been familiar with the body of Karloff's work when she reviewed THE RAVEN in 1935.

Karloff himself was always quick to point out that only as the Frankenstein Monster and in THE MUMMY was he completely covered over in make-up. In films such as THE BLACK CAT or THE OLD DARK HOUSE he wore character make-up to create a personality but was not a monster. And certainly Karloff's varied interpretations and his intelligent delivery of dialog assured that he was not just another ugly face.

Miss Tazelaar's contention that Karloff did not "create genuine emotion" is refuted by the countless letters Karloff often referred to which expressed sympathy for Frankenstein's Monster.

Furthermore, Miss Tazelaar does not mention Karloff's non-horror roles before 1935, such as the pathetic degenerate in FIVE STAR FINAL, the religious fanatic in THE LOST PATROL or the anti-Semitic Baron in THE HOUSE OF ROTHSCHILD.

In fact, the simple truth that Karloff was able to *escape* his stereotype and appear in such top budget, major studio pictures is testimony to his ability as an actor.

The theory that Karloff often gave slovenly performances in roles he did not respect can also be answered. When an actor becomes typed in tremendously similar roles and finds it impossible to add to his steady character, he is often accused of merely walking through the part. But if each character is designed by the script writer to be the same

as the last, then it is the actor's duty to play it the same way. The real test is whether or not each rehash of the same character lives up to the standard of the first.

For example, Karloff was often cast as a kindly scientist who must test his fabulous discovery in an illegal way and is punished, thus enraging him because his gift to the world has been refused. The first of these, I believe, was THE MAN THEY COULD NOT HANG, and the role was not cliché at the time. Only when Columbia ground out several more, such as BEFORE I HANG, THE MAN WITH NINE LIVES and THE DEVIL COMMANDS, was Karloff listlessly reprising the same character.

Yet in each picture Karloff manages to convey the true goodness and warmth of the essentially kind scientist. It was Columbia's fault that these characters were identical and it was Karloff's duty as an actor to give the studio exactly what they were paying him for. Even when cheapie producer Monogram studios called for the same character in THE APE, or years later when Karloff played a similar role in CORRIDORS OF BLOOD, the character Karloff played in each case emerged as a real person.

Only considered as a group do they become stereotypes.

Conclusion: Karloff's performances were *not* slovenly and in doing as he did he proved himself a true Thespian by doing exactly the interpretation he was paid to do.

As to the third question, it is not always within an actor's province to choose his roles. Stereotyping is a Hollywood tradition. That Karloff could occasionally play a non-horror role is a tribute to his ability: his counterpart, Bela Lugosi, virtually never escaped his type.

But Karloff throughout his life described himself as a "working actor," and expressed his desire to go on working to the end. With this in mind, what else could Karloff do but accept the offers he received?

Furthermore, an actor is, in the final analysis, an entertainer. Karloff knew that over the years the moviegoing public had shown their approval of his horror roles and that he was entertaining millions by playing his bizarre parts.

Karloff, then, hardly disgraced himself or his profession by playing the roles that his public *wanted* him to play.

So it seems we've answered all three questions posed by Karloff's detractors.

Could Boris Karloff act?

With a vengeance!

© UNIVERSAL STUDIOS 1939.

His last screen appearance in the role of the monster, SON OF FRANKENSTEIN.

Autographed at 27, a stage appearance, probably in Canada, 5 years before his first film.

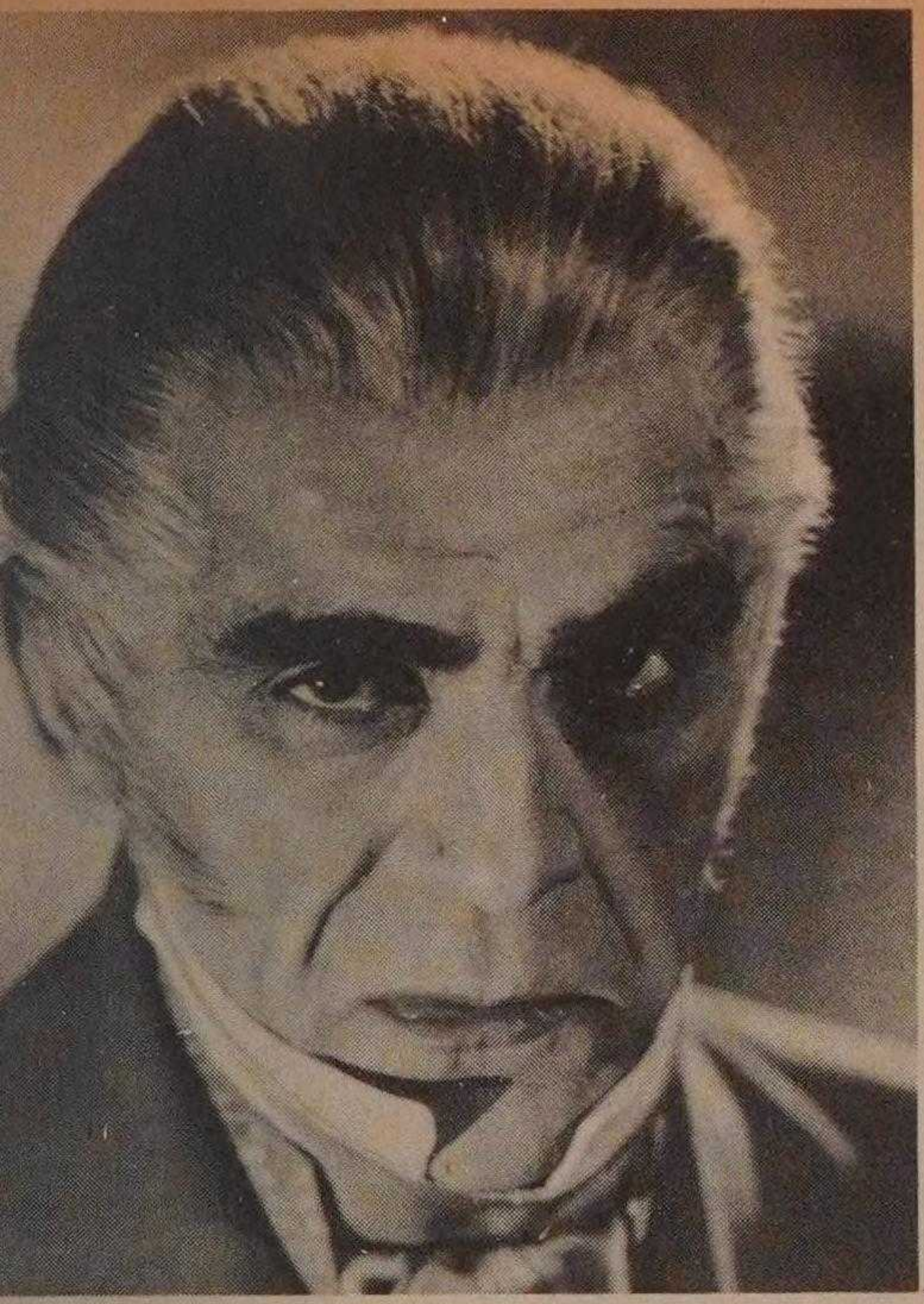
A baddie in Tiffany's THE UTAH KID, 1930.

Oriental characterization in Warners' WEST OF SHANGHAI.

© VITAGRAPH INC. 1937.

© MGM/TV 1967.

As Mother Muffin in "The Affair" of the same name in TV series The Girl from U.N.C.L.E.



© UNITED ARTISTS 1934.

To play opposite a man he immensely admired, the late George Arliss, Karloff temporarily stepped down from stardom for his role of Baron Ledkrantz in THE HOUSE OF ROTHSCHILD.

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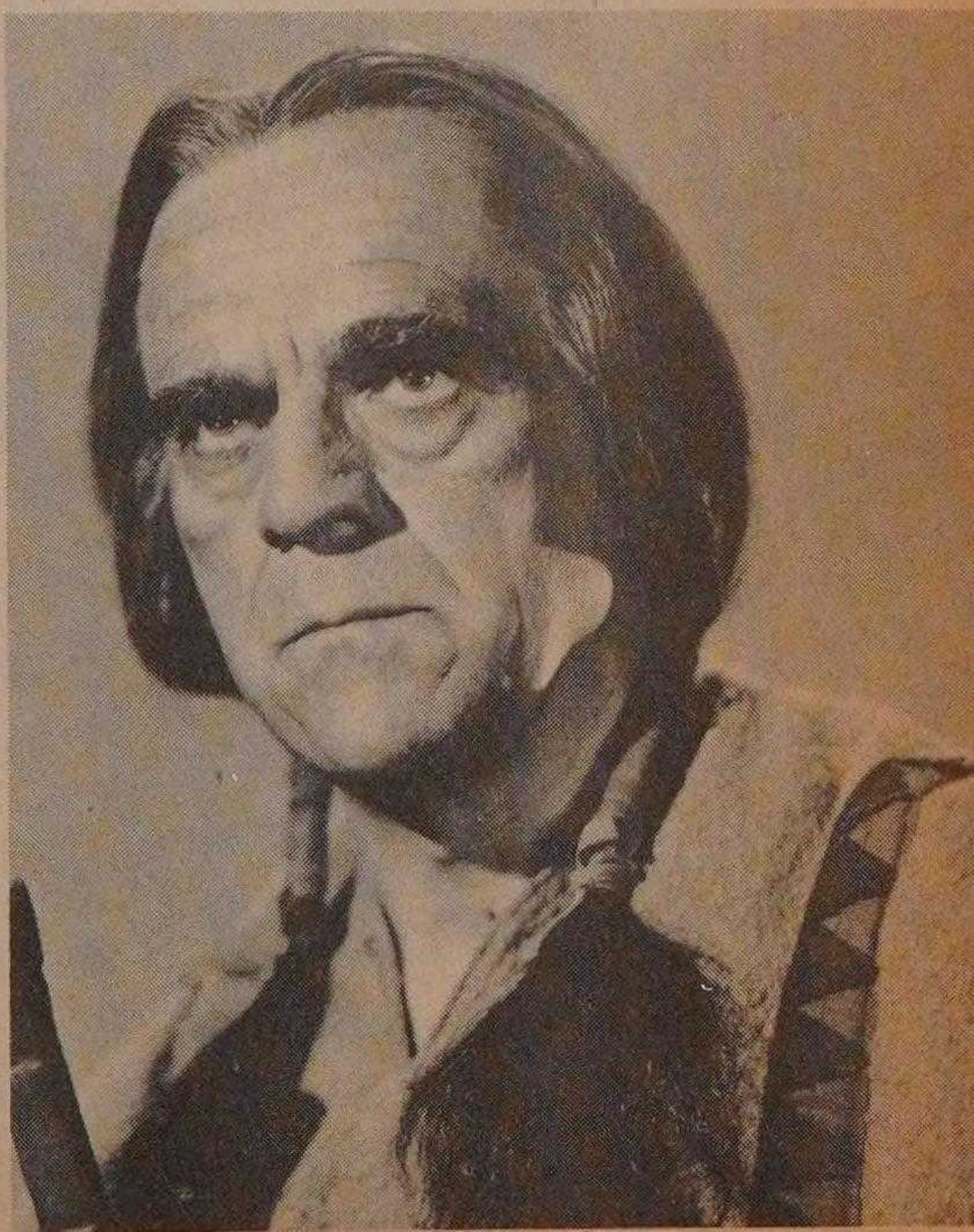

In one of his two Indian roles, which followed one year after the other. (See Chronological Filmography.) Tishomingo in TAP ROOTS.

The Monster rests. Karloff relaxing during the making of THE BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN.

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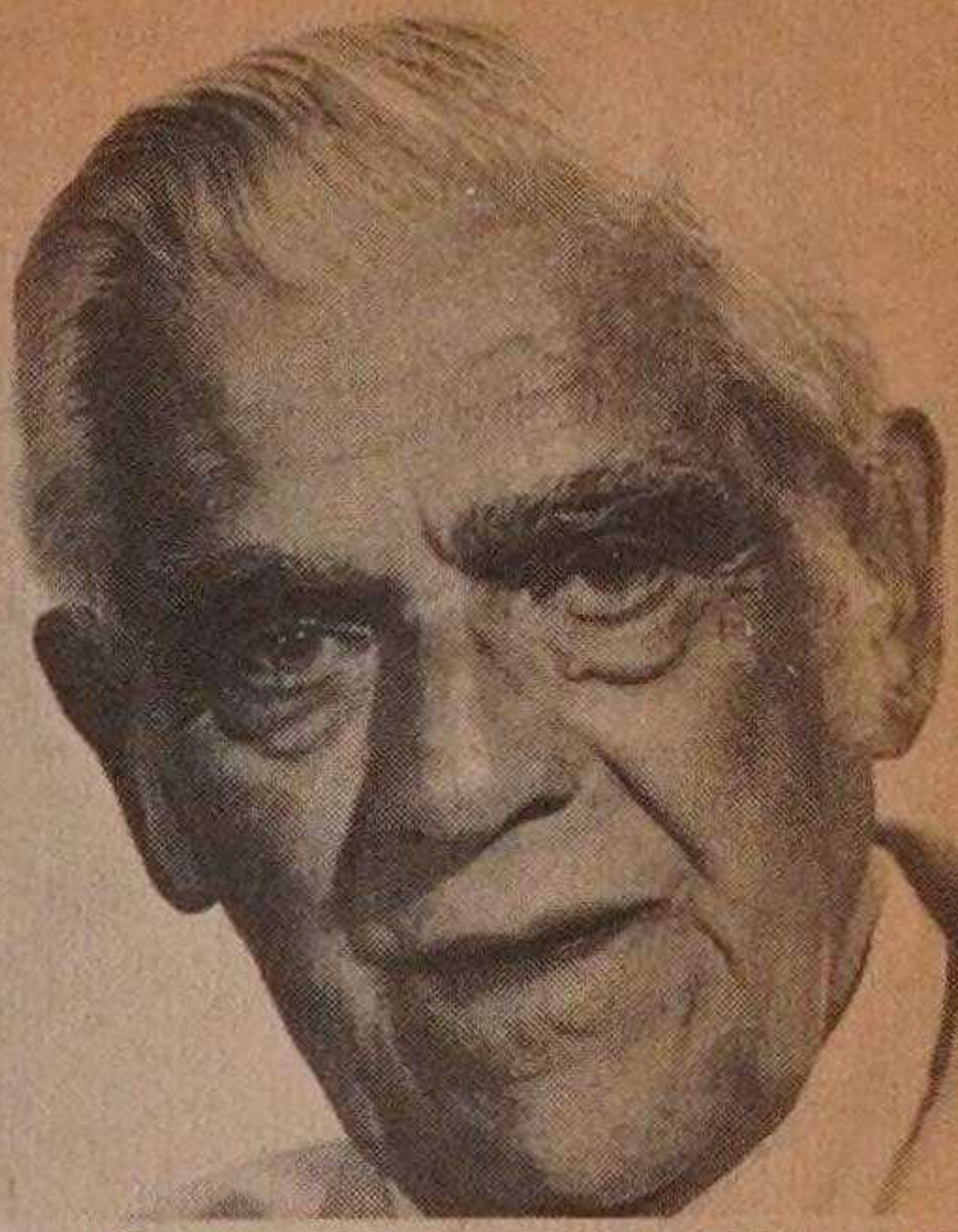
Straight portrait at 54.

© COLUMBIA STUDIOS 1942.



Posed for Famous Monsters of Filmland during the shooting of his last film, THE INCREDIBLE INVASION.

© WALTER J. DAUGHERTY 1968.

Posed in England during the making of THE GHOUL, Gaumont-British, 1933.

He had fun, as Dr. Scarabus, making THE RAVEN. I know —I was there . . . FJA.

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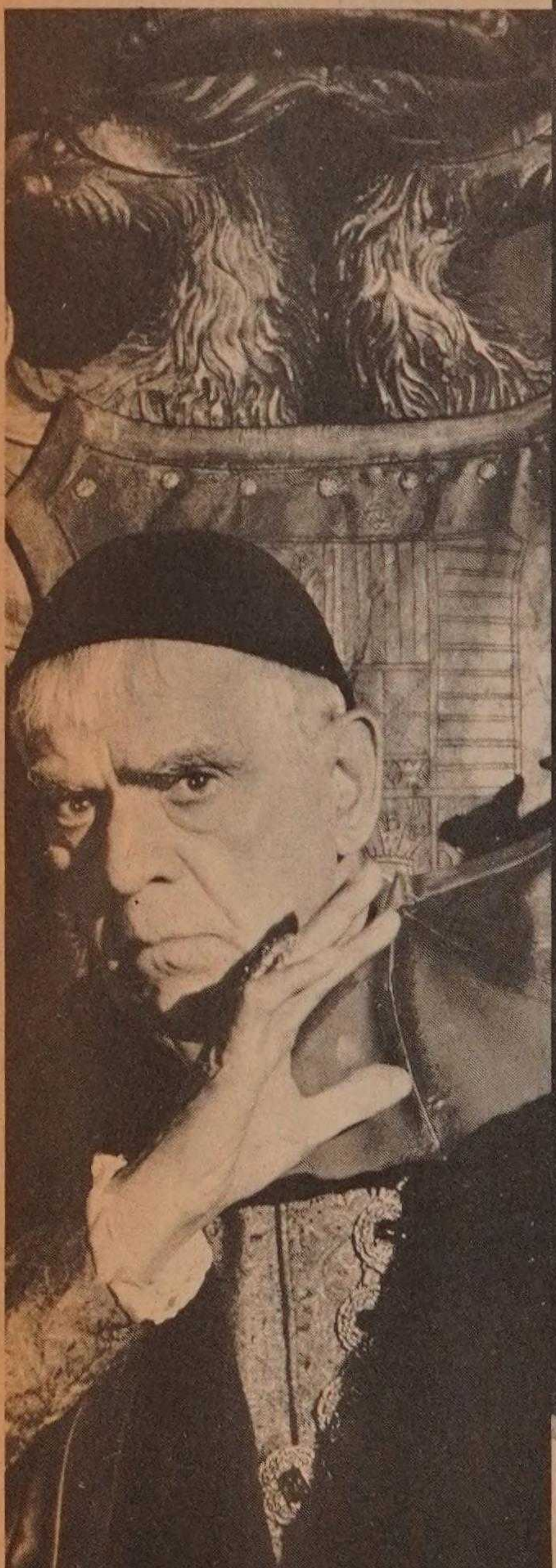

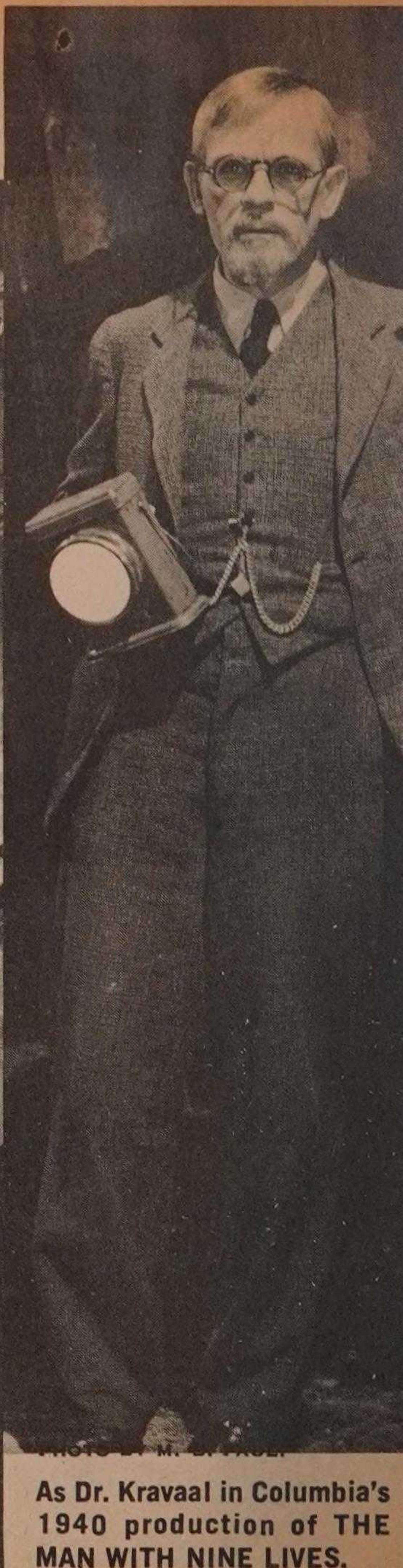

As Dr. Kravaal in Columbia's 1940 production of THE MAN WITH NINE LIVES.

Mord the Magnificent in TOWER OF LONDON.

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As Bateman in the original RAVEN.

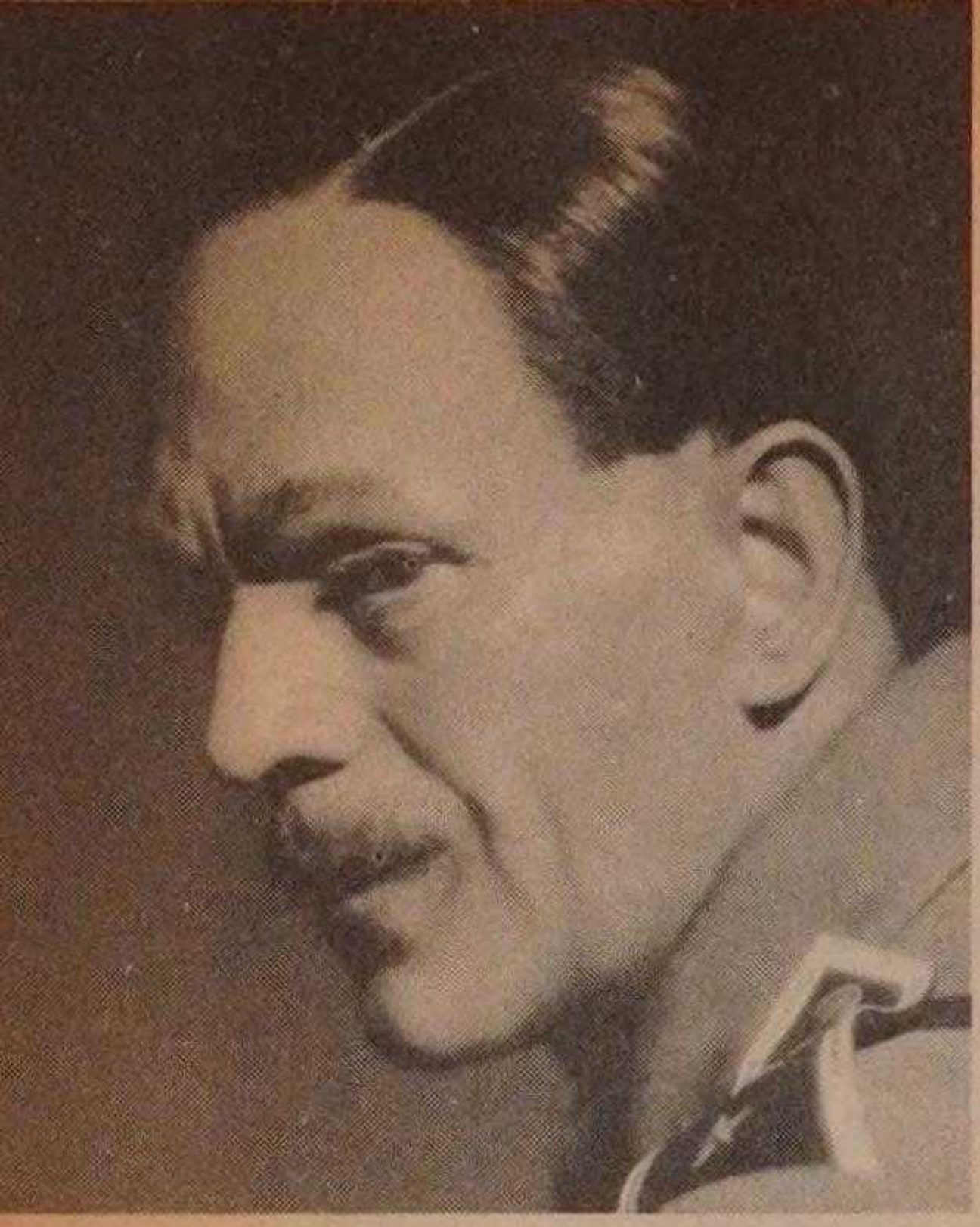
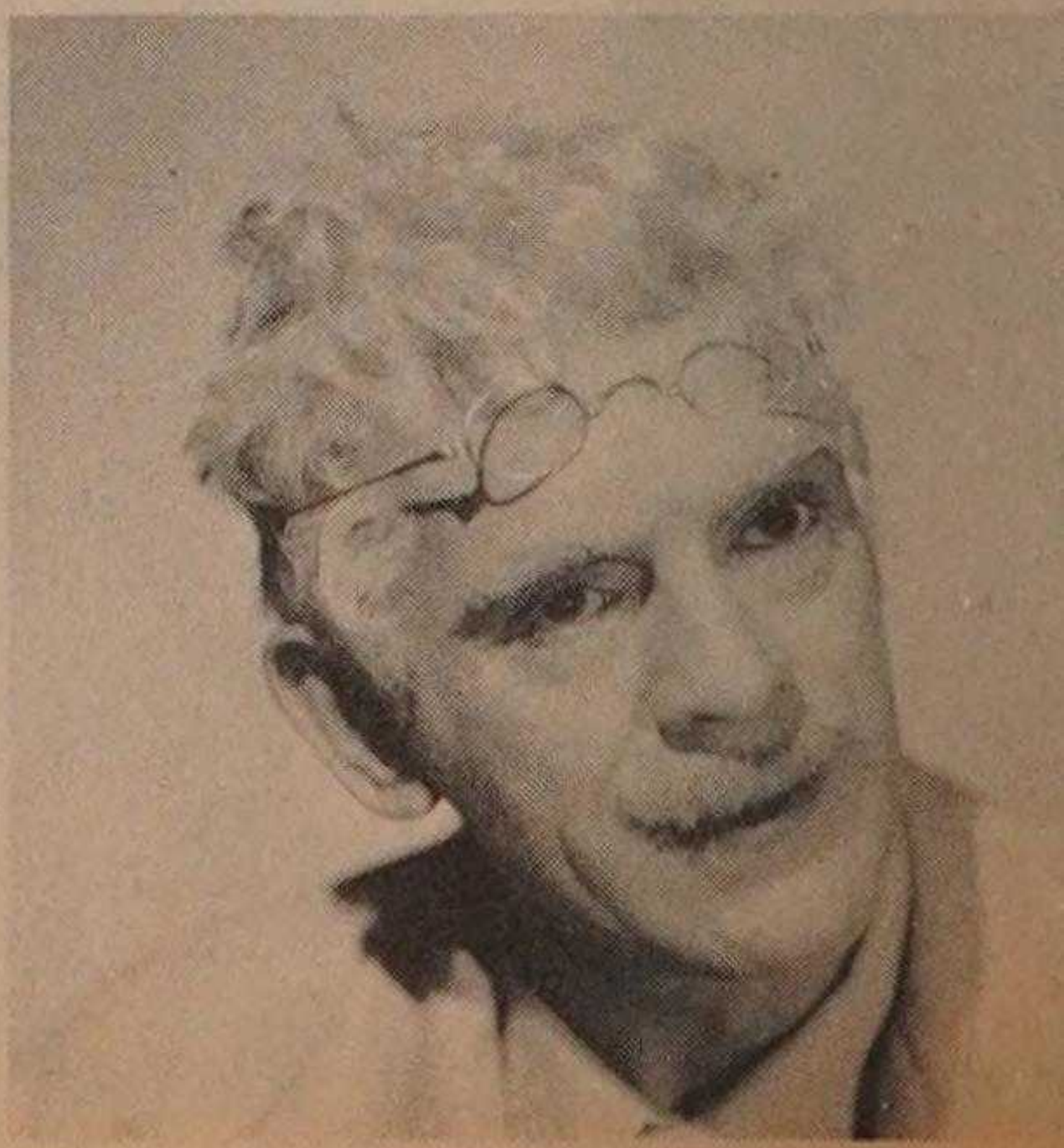


PHOTO BY SCOTTY WELBOURNE.

Gen. Wu Yen Fang in THE WARLORD, Warner Bros. 1937.

Karloff is coy! in gag photo made between scenes of his 1944 film for Universal (in color) THE CLIMAX.

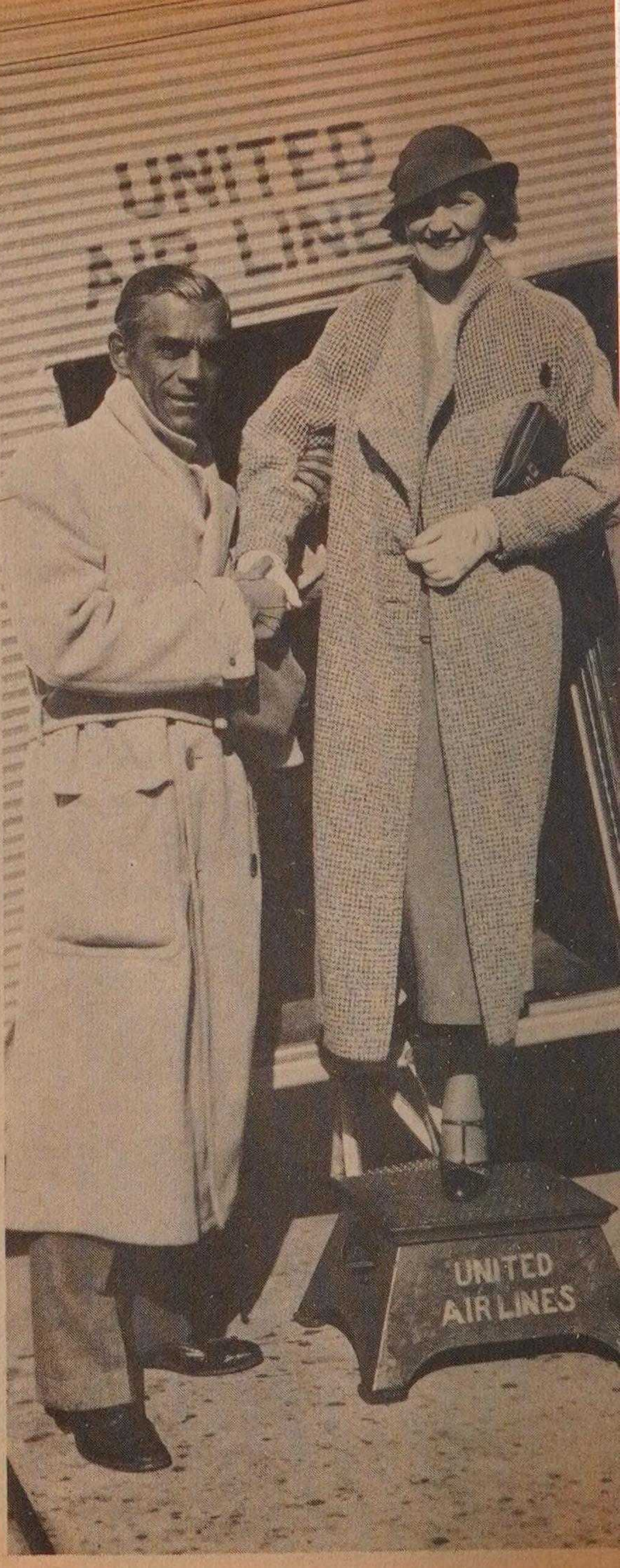


Prof. Billings in THE BOOGIE MAN WILL GET YOU, Columbia, 1942.

PHOTO BY BERT ANDERSON.

The Birth of a Legend as the late great Master of Make-up Jack Pierce, creates upon Karloff their mutual Monsterpiece.

Twenty-seven years after the original Karloff being made up by Ray Romero and Geo. Bau (hand) for lead in Allied Artists 1957 production of FRANKENSTEIN— 1970.



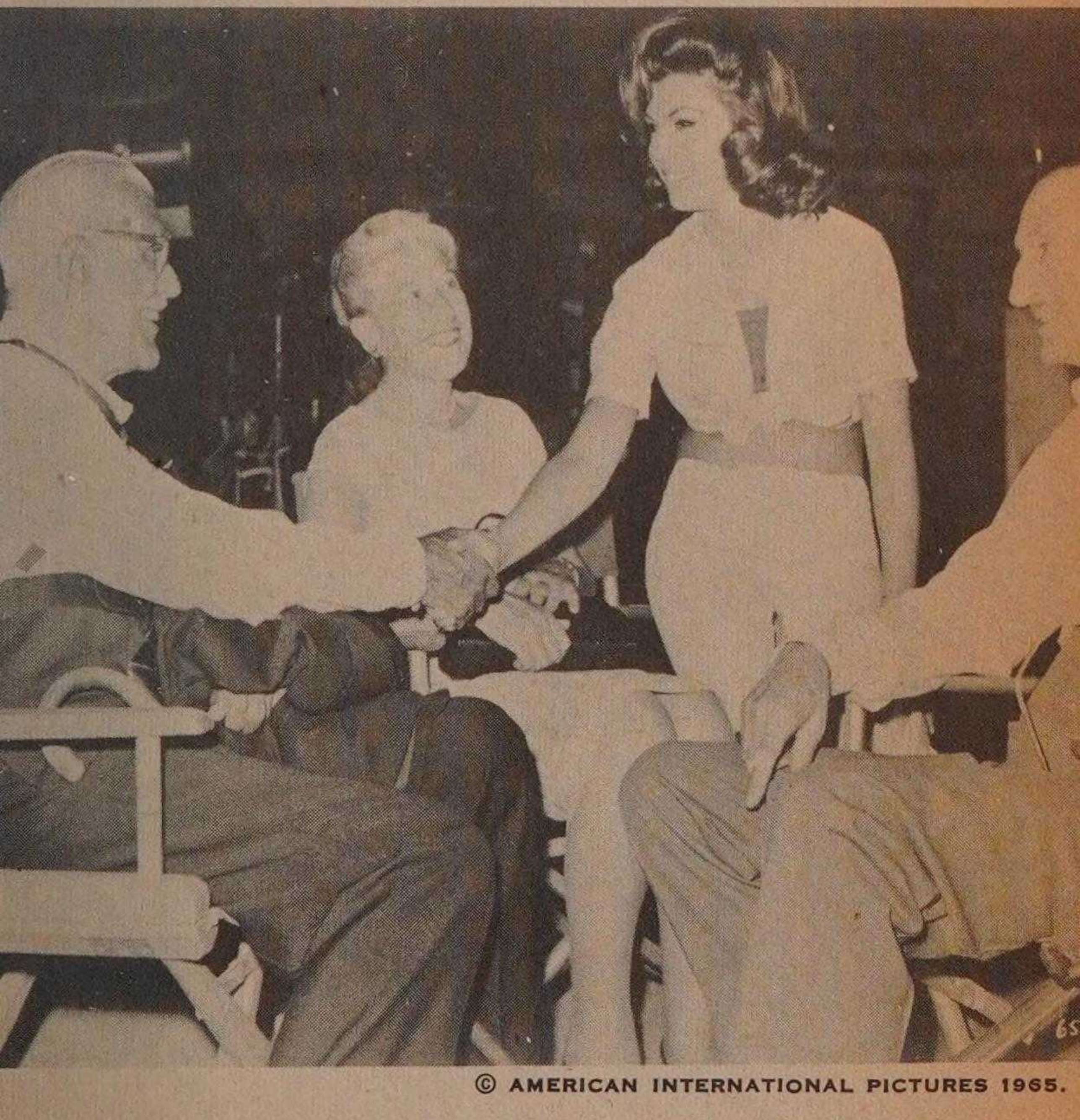
With his second wife, Dorothy, mother of his daughter Sara Jane, on way to England in 1933 to make THE GHOUL.

Enjoying canine company on his Cold Water Canyon estate above Beverly Hills, Calif., in 1937.

© UNIVERSAL PICTURES 1934.

"The Two of Us"—DRACULA & FRANKENSTEIN at their weirdest as just a couple of nice guys! From GIFT OF GAB.

Karloff clasps hands with Susan Hart as wife Evelyn and old acting friend Basil Rathbone look on.



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BORIS KARLOFF

23 NOV 1887
2 FEB 1969

FORREST ACKER

In his 78th year, he had just recorded the narration I wrote for him for his Decca longplay phonograph album, An Evening With BORIS KARLOFF And His Friends.

Photographs in this section selected by Donald A. Wollheim from the Ackerman Archives.

I SAW HIM ACT

Bill Warren

The old man swayed back and forth on the bench before the wooden pipe organ, his arthritis-crippled fingers playing over the silent keys. Behind and above him flames suddenly erupted with the hiss of gas. Dirt fell loosely from the ceiling, the turning water wheel caught fire and improbably halted. With thudding finality, a beam fell.

"Cut!" the director called. "Hurry up, you guys, right away." As he called, the special effects crew dashed up to the raised area of the dungeon set with fire extinguishers and quenched the flames on the floor. Those on the walls were turned off backstage.

The old man, almost unnoticed, made his way off the platform to the ever-present wheelchair. "Thanks, Boris," the director said.

Boris Karloff had finished the final scene for HOUSE OF EVIL, one of the two last movies he would ever make.

And I saw it. Me, Bill Warren, just a cipher in his millions of fans, who first remembers seeing Boris Karloff when he was nine years old, watching him in the unfortunate BLACK CASTLE and wondering how the kindly man on the screen had scared people for years. To me, at nine, he seemed only pleasant and sympathetic.

I first encountered the living Karloff around a year before he made those last four films, when I was invited to Milt Larsen's wonderful Magic Castle to attend a press reception for Karloff, publicizing his record album, *An Evening with Karloff and His Friends.*

I was not personally introduced to him at that time but was one of several more-or-less anonymous faces firing questions at him in one of the little magicians' showrooms at the Castle. He seemed then to be a kind, thoughtful man, but also seemed to be very, very tired.

Then, in 1968, Boris Karloff returned to Los Angeles to make four films in five weeks for a co-production deal between Azteca Films of Mexico and Hollywood's Columbia Pictures. I was invited to the small soundstage on Santa Monica Boulevard in Hollywood where all of Karloff's scenes for what were to prove to be his last movies were to be shot.

That first day I looked around the small cramped soundstage, trying to find Karloff. It is perfectly true that he was

hard to spot initially, as he was seated among some persons in his wheelchair.

No one was speaking to him and he appeared to be quietly drowsing. He was made up for the part of the kindly scientist of THE FEAR CHAMBER, whose assistant takes control of a literal experiment in terror.

Karloff was quite friendly but seemed to have some trouble speaking. The weather was stifling hot and as he only had one half of one lung to breathe with, speech was not easy for him. But he answered my few questions, some of which I am sure he had been asked many times before—but he responded to all, graciously and honestly.

He autographed some stills for me as well but since I could see that even this minor exertion was an effort, I took my leave. (Incidentally, I am sadly aware that Boris Karloff would not be pleased with my mentioning his illness but he is gone now. And when a public and well-loved person dies, his life no longer belongs to him—it belongs to those who loved him. And I know that those people—you, the readers of this book—would want to know how much this wonderful old gentleman suffered to be able to entertain you.)

Although I did not encounter Karloff on the set of the next picture shot (ISLE OF THE SNAKE PEOPLE) I was on the sets several days each for the third, HOUSE OF EVIL, and for the fourth, THE INCREDIBLE INVASION. In the latter, a science-horror piece, Karloff played a scientist who accidentally sets free non-living force-creatures. (One of the props used in the laboratory sequence should have been familiar to him: it had been used in both FRANKENSTEIN and BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN.)

Again, when I arrived, Karloff was seated to one side, out of the way, holding an oxygen mask to his face and studying his lines. (All his career long he prided himself on being a quick study). Fellow fan Jon Berg and I hovered around him, not talking but merely pleased to be in his presence. We also half-heartedly tried to keep visitors to the set from bothering him.

For example, one mother who was on the set dragged her son up to the tired old actor and said, "See, he played Frankenstein." The child said, "You mean Herman Munster?"

Karloff did not glance up at first, as if he did not hear them. But when the mother spoke directly to him, he raised his head and smiled. He spoke, as always, kindly and sincerely with even such as these well-intentioned but ignorant people. When they left, I am sure that they took

with them a new respect for "the man who played Frankenstein."

And I developed a new respect myself, for shortly thereafter Karloff began to shoot his scenes. Although I had watched him the week before on the earlier picture, the moment was still thrilling.

The call came for him to enter the set. I felt strong sympathy for this resolute and brave old man who had difficulty even walking. But when he heard the director call, the years fell away and he rose easily to his feet, appearing 20 years younger. The chance to work, even in this film (which, if it is ever released, will probably be serviceable but no classic) made a young man of him again.

In a later scene of the same sequence, Karloff was required to bolt a door. He did this—and suddenly a look of pain crossed his face and he slumped against a wall. I gasped and started forward, so convincing was his acting—but that is what it was. I stepped back, embarrassed, only to find every other visitor to the set doing the same thing. He had fooled us all.

In watching him work in bits and pieces (the way all movies are made) for the rest of the afternoon, I discovered something that pleased me, as a Karloff fan—Boris Karloff was probably one of the most conscientious actors in films.

He had studied the script carefully as always, so he knew, not only from his own lines but also from what other characters said about the person he was playing, the personality of this character.

He knew that he had to bring this part fully to life, for in a fantasy picture, obviously, believability is of enormous importance. Therefore, if a scene had several takes, Karloff would vary his delivery of his lines slightly on each take, changing pitch or accenting different words, but always keeping *completely* within the bounds of the personality he was portraying. This made the character more real both for himself and the other actors in the scene. And this belief was transmitted to those who saw the film later.

I commented on this to him. "I've done it all my film career," he answered. "I've discovered that it keeps one from becoming too stale. This is a very great danger in working in films."

(I later have had occasion to discuss this with members of the movie business; they assured me that this practice was very rare, and most desirable. It was the mark of Boris Karloff, a true craftsman.)

And then the scene was over and he left the soundstage.

After the shooting was completed, he went back to England, only to return to the U.S. later in the year, when he made "The White Birch" segment of TV's *Name of the Game*. At the end of 1968, he went home to England for the last time.

And I saw him act.

I also was able to say to him on my behalf and for lovers of fantasy films everywhere, "Mr. Karloff, I really can't tell you how much I think of you. You've always been my favorite actor." I stopped, blushing, unable to go on.

And Boris Karloff replied, embarrassed himself but obviously pleased, "Why, thank you, young man. I *have* tried. It's good to know somebody cares."

Goodby, Mr. Karloff.

THE WOMAN WHO WOULDN'T TALK— ABOUT KARLOFF

Dorothy Calhoun

(Ed. Note: Several years ago I spent a fascinating afternoon in the apartment of Hope Lugosi, fifth and final wife of the late Bela Lugosi. She had worshipped him from afar through years of his movie career and finally, a dream come true, married him at the end of his life.

After his death she became an embittered woman. People plagued her for mementoes of Lugosi. Newspaper reporters, magazine freelancers, radio and television personalities constantly wanted to interview her. But they didn't care anything about *her*, they just wanted to Learn All about Lugosi.

It made Hope very unhappy. She felt she was losing her personality. She came to believe that all people cared about her for was because she had been married to Lugosi. So sincere was she in her determination to "forget all about ever having been Bela Lugosi's wife and start up a new life" that she startled me by voluntarily giving me what I would have presumed to be one of her most precious possessions: her scrapbook with her wedding invitation, photos on the day of her marriage, Bela Lugosi's Social Security card, even "Dracula's" death certificate!

Following is a story, seemingly forgotten since it appeared in the pages of *Movie Classic* magazine in 1932, about an ex-wife of Boris Karloff never referred to. One newspaper obituary claimed he had been married five times

and when I first read it I was of the opinion that they had probably confused him with his frequent co-star Lugosi. But now, three wives accounted for, one wonders if there perhaps actually were two more?

Lest my motives be misinterpreted, let me make myself crystal clear. I am not interested in digging up any scandal about Boris Karloff. I wouldn't put it into print if I learned it. I take it that we all, assembled here, are *friends* of Boris Karloff, interested primarily in the accomplishments of his public life and not so much prying into his private. As a great admirer of his myself, I find it of passing interest to see a picture of two women he was once married to and to read their remarks. But these articles about and by the Two Other Mrs. Karloffs are presented simply as a historic service and not for any sensationalistic purpose—as indeed the reader will be disappointed if anything sensational is expected to be learned by reading them.

The names of Clark Gable and Boris Karloff are on everybody's tongue to-day. Overnight, after years of struggle, they have taken the movies by storm. Everybody wants to know what they are like in private life, where they came from, how they got their start. Someone discovers that both men have been divorced. The Press rushes to find the ex-wives—to get *their* stories.

And if the ex-wives claim they have nothing to tell, and object to being asked impertinent questions? They will be forced to tell, they will be persecuted! This is no idle statement. They have already suffered this persecution. For months.

Reporters for sensational newspapers, feature writers for Sunday supplements, not satisfied with the prosaic details handed out by publicity departments, are vying with each other to unearth the most startling stories possible about these suddenly famous Unknowns. They realize that the ex-wives of these men know intimate details about these men—*and they expect ex-wives to tell.*

The lively curiosity of the public demands colorful facts about their favorites, particularly about their pasts. "You Americans!" Valentino once said bitterly, "you set up idols for the fun of tearing them down!"

In the search for color and sensation, everyone who has known the new stars intimately in the unknown past is sought out. But the brunt of the attack falls on the women they have put out of their lives and who, the sensation-hunters argue, must be anxious to get even with them. *If*

these self-appointed investigators were right, these women would be prosperous to-day. Thousands of dollars have been offered to them for their stories—and indignantly turned down. And so they have been persecuted, bitterly, cruelly.

After "Frankenstein" had set the public to talking about the new mystery man of the screen, Boris Karloff, Josephine Dillon Gable had a caller one day—a young and pretty woman whose card bore the name, "Pauline Karloff." She told her that she was a dancer, an artist and the ex-wife of the new screen star.

"Reporters are after me to tell them sensational stories about Boris," she said. "I knew that you must have been bothered the same way—so I came to ask you what I should do to stop them."

No motion picture scene that movie star Gable or movie star Karloff is ever asked to make can be more dramatic than the meeting of these ex-wives in Josephine Dillon's plain little livingroom. There they sat, two women who had known and still knew the pinch of poverty, discussing earnestly how to protect the men they had married—and lost.

WOULDN'T TALK ABOUT BORIS

Pauline Karloff's story of persecution by the prying yellow press is very similar to Josephine Dillon's. Ever since FRANKENSTEIN was released, she has been besieged by sensation-mongers on the trail of a startling story of her life as Mrs. Karloff. She, too, had an intimate friend come to her and beg her for a story. When she refused to give her one, the friend became defiant.

"After all, I've got enough already to make a good article," she said. "You know the things you've told me. And you know how hard up I am!"

"I'm hard up, too," said Pauline, "but not hard up enough for that. If you dare to print one word I've ever told you, I'll sue you for libel!"

Ever since her divorce from Karloff three years ago, his ex-wife has supported herself precariously by painting charming and fantastic women in the modern manner and renting her pictures to studios for modernistic settings in films. There have been times—she laughs a little mirthlessly—when she literally did not know where her next meal was coming from. But when one of the largest Sunday newspapers in the country recently offered her $500 and then increased the offer to $1000 for a personally signed story about Boris Karloff she refused.

"As an artist, I wish success to a fellow artist," she says. "But why must they drag me into this? I have been out of his life for three years. When we meet on the Boulevard, we don't speak."

Boris Karloff had lived in Hollywood *twenty years* before his ghastly, unforgettable characterization of the *Monster* in FRANKENSTEIN aroused any public curiosity about him. And yet so completely are the struggling unknowns submerged and lost in Hollywood's teeming life that there are few who know what manner of man he was in those years of struggle. His ex-wife was, perhaps, the only one who really knew. So she is being threatened, persecuted by sensation-hunters—who are trying to make her tell.

Sudden success on the screen may mean caviar and pheasant for the tables of the new stars, but it often means taking the very bread away from their generous ex-wives *who refuse to tell.* Josephine Dillon Gable and Pauline Karloff will tell anybody THIS!

A LETTER FROM THE KARLOFFS

Dorothy Karloff

Old Malt House, England.

Dear Insiders:

We just haven't time to write to everyone, we have been so very busy lately, so we're hoping you will be good enough to pass this round-robin letter on to the Jimmie Gleasons, who were here with us three years ago, and will know many of the people we are wining and dining with now.

Boris has signed for another picture, this time with Twickenham Films, which will keep us here longer than we had at first planned—probably three months. So, as a result, we are house-hunting these days. We drove through Surrey and Sussex with Sir John Pratt, Boris' brother, and Lady Pratt, through the most beautiful country, and ended up at an old Inn in Mayfield, where we sat before a roaring fire toasting ourselves, and drinking good English Ale—don't you envy us? It was a *real* English Inn—the kind you read about—and they are truly hospitable and filled with the atmosphere of good comfort.

The next day while Boris was at the studio I lunched with Joyce Grenfell, who is a friend of Russell Gleason's. She is delightful company, and Lady Mary Campbell joined our table for a chat, as well. I liked them both tremendously.

Boris worked late at the studio, as he so often does, and we had supper last week at the Savoy Grill, where you see

everyone in the theatrical world at some time or another, they say. Certainly you see everyone in London's theatre, at any rate. That night Tullio Carminati, Noel Coward, Robert Kane, Michael Balcon, Florence Desmond and Gertrude Lawrence were there. *AND* the Karloffs. We had a grand time, and walked home through a late Spring snowfall. Imagine—in May!

We found our house! This is several days later, as I hadn't time to finish my letter-of-the-first-part. Hope you don't mind this erratic method of corresponding? The house is called Old Malt House—it's over three hundred years old, and absolutely perfect. We stayed in the country with some friends at Moyleen Farm, and drove to Hurley, which is the loveliest, tiniest village you can imagine, and there we saw the Old Malt House and both fell in love with it at once.

So—now we're planning to move into the darling place—and it's near Moyleen Farms, too, so we'll have neighbours!

The other night we dined with friends who seemed to know all the titles in Europe intimately, but they were all so natural and nice that we forgot the titles existed. My high point was reached when I found myself playing bridge with Lady Mary Montague, who went to New York last year to stay with the Culbertsons just for some bridge—which may give you a rough idea of the way she plays. However, I was the only one at the table who held any cards, and the only winner—even Boris was unusually unlucky—so I had a real break that night.

We breakfast in bed on Sunday, and then go for long walks—too lazy to even play tennis. At tea-time friends come strolling in—last Sunday four men came in for tea, making me the only female with eight men—which is all right too!

For dinner last night we had royalty, no less. As guests, I mean. The owner of a film company here in London arrived with Princess Toubitsky and Prince and Princess Lowenstein. Then, after dinner, we all went to the local or village "pub" called "Chequers" where we were entertained after hours by the proprietors. I can't describe what fun it was or how different from anything in America. All eight of us and an ancient dog sitting around the parlor of an old pub with special police permission for late hours, eating cheese and watercress and drinking ale. We didn't get home until the wee hours, and I claim it to be a perfect night's entertainment.

Today I took Boris' lunch to him at the studio, and watched him work awile. Then to meet Sir John and be

shown through the Temple, a sort of legal fastness that has belonged to the bar since 1600, and before that it belonged to the Templars.

When I got home today I found one of Boris' most ardent British admirers waiting with flowers, which she brings three times a week and sits until he comes home. How is that for a nice gesture? All the fans are so friendly and courteous over here.

Now we are waiting for some men to arrive and go into a huddle about the next picture with Boris.

So good night—and Boris and I join in sending warm regards to our friends in Hollywood—

Cordially—
DOROTHY KARLOFF

BLACK SUNDAY

2 February 1969

Mary Ellen Rabogliatti

A lonely, cold and whistling day
That clothes the wind-swept world in gray.
This a day for the children of Poe
And for those who dream of long ago.
On this day has died a king
Who wore no crown or royal ring,
Who ruled no kingdom, had no command
Except the power of a gentle hand.
No matter how frightful his disguise
A love for children shone through his eyes
And in return they called him king—
"King of Monsters"—but no sting
Did that title strange contain,
Only honor for his reign.
The reign is over, the king is gone;
But from the past his works live on:
Masterpieces do not die—
In them he'll ever be nearby.
And in the night, above the towns,
A full moon shines on English downs.

THE WARLOCK AND THE SORCERERS

Peter J. Jarman

A Look at One of the Last Karloffilms

A young man will never be the same after this dreadful night.

For in the laboratory of BORIS KARLOFF the powers of the unknown are always apt to get devilishly out of hand. As they did in THE DEVIL COMMANDS. And THE MAN WHO did this. And did that.

As they do in THE SORCERERS.

THE SORCERERS is the heart-pounding chiller (in thriller color) which Boris has just made (1967) in our native England.

As the picture opens, an old man with a white beard has been standing in a shadowy street for some time, watching a teenage boy in a cafe. Obviously the young man is bored with life and tonight he feels the emptiness of his aimless "good time" existence more strongly than ever.

The bent, bearded figure approaches the young, restless one.

A strangely ominous conversation ensues. A snatch of it: "I can promise you, my boy, more excitement than you have ever dreamed of!"

The boy is game. After all, what does he have to lose but his boredom? His mind . . . perhaps his life. But the young, seeking new and different experiences, rarely worry about *that*.

And so, the young man accompanies the elderly Professor home—for a scientific experiment . . .

BIRTH OF A MONSTER

England gave him birth but it was Hollywood which made Karloff one of the world's favorite nightmares!

He left his native land unknown, to return many years later, in 1933, an international name forever to be associated with FRANKENSTEIN, unhinged scientists and prickly spines.

Strange it is that, despite his firm British origins, Boris has made comparatively few movies in England. His first in '33 was THE GHOUL.

Then, a bit later on, he came back again for JUGGERNAUT, and THE MAN WHO CHANGED HIS MIND,

the latter known variously in the United States as THE MAN WHO LIVED AGAIN, DR. MANIAC and THE BRAINIAC. Way back in 1936 Forry Ackerman, editor, saw it several times and pronounced it "one of the best."

WHEN KARLOFF RE-SAW FRANKENSTEIN

Hollywood kept Karloff continuously busy but his occasional British films continued after World War II with productions like CORRIDORS OF BLOOD (with Christopher Lee) GRIP OF THE STRANGLER (THE HAUNTED STRANGLER) and THE MONSTER OF TERROR (DIE, MONSTER DIE!).

Now Boris has, as he recently told me, "returned to his roots" with a permanent home in London town—a fine apartment which Editor Ackerman and I visited together in the Fall of '65, where we stayed long into the afternoon talking to "King" Boris of the old days of Universal Studios and a million other things besides. As Fate would have it, that very evening our host was seeing himself for the first time in over 30 years in his original FRANKENSTEIN.

And although Boris (80 on 23 Nov. 1967) still travels frequently to the USA, the fact that England is now his regular abode will, I fervently hope, encourage British producers to make more use of his classic services.

Certainly the independent British co-producer who was associated with THE PROJECTED MAN and is now making DEATHSHEAD VAMPIRE (with Peter Cushing) has made a monstrous step in the right direction, for THE SORCERERS, filmed on location in London, gives Boris his best role in a long while. This terror-filled production gives full rein to that Karloff genius for combining studies of sinister obsession with a commanding sympathy for his characters.

And THE SORCERERS are plural: in this picture Karloff has a very evil wife . . .

THE SOURCE OF THE SORCERY

Karloff plays Professor Monserrat, a one-time stage hypnotist who has never quite believed in his powers but sadly dreams of a comeback. His wife Estelle, tired of near poverty in their declining years, urges him to make his dreams reality.

For years he has been working on a machine which would enable them to project their wills into the brains of others at a distance and even to feel the sensations of another. The time comes when the professor believes his invention has

been perfected. Now he needs a guinea pig and so he seeks out the bored kick-loving young man on that fateful night.

The boy's name is Mike and he experiences sensations that are out of this world when he voluntarily sits in the weird "electric chair."

As shock impulses zoom through Mike's head, he feels things totally unknown to him before.

Bizarre,

Bewildering.

SINISTER SORCERY

No permanent change seems to have taken place in Mike's mind and after his unusual experience he leaves the house of the Monserrats, apparently no worse for wear. But soon he finds himself doing things which afterward he cannot remember. The explanation, unknown to him, is that the old couple at home are experimenting on him with the remote control and it is succeeding only too well!

The professor, kindly and well-intentioned, is concerned with the function of his machine only as an instrument of good. "I can help mankind in so many ways!" he says. But Estelle, his increasingly unbalanced wife, has other, more selfish desires. To begin with, she wants a certain fur coat.

By constant practice Estelle's powers are growing stronger than her husband's and at last, to appease her, the professor agrees to influence the boy in a criminal act: against his nature, Mike steals the fur coat that Mrs. Monserrat desperately desires.

So excited is Mrs. Monserrat by her newfound power that her mind is stepped up to a pitch approaching insanity! The sorcery her husband has scientifically created has made it possible for her to induce actions in others without fear of consequences to herself. And so—

She mentally orders Mike to kill.

And kill again!

DEATH FROM A DISTANCE

Long distance murder!

Prof. Monserrat is horrified to observe his wife's mad love for killing without conscience, the sadistic pleasure she takes in controlling a human puppet to perform her death-wishes from afar.

He argues with her, pleads, commands—but to no avail. "Then I will help you no more!" he swears. "I regret my criminal acts and will be a party to no further crimes!"

Estelle's smug smile infuriates her husband and he smashes

his machine in a fit of anger and remorse. The science-induced sorcery will now be at an end.

But it isn't!

Mrs. Monserrat's supernatural abilities have become so strong that she no longer needs the assistance of her husband *or* his machine! She has become a power unto herself! Her dreadful will has proved greatly stronger than his!

HUMAN MURDER MACHINE

As young Mike continues to have his horrible "blackouts," he viciously beats up one of his closest friends—and kills two young girls!

Meanwhile, in order to prevent him from interfering with her "pleasures," Estelle makes her enfeebled husband a prisoner, binding him to some furniture and taunting him.

Mike's friend Alan, and Alan's girlfriend Nicole, realize Mike is "responsible" for the killings although they cannot guess the true cause of his personality change. When another victim is claimed they call in the police and the terrified Mike tries to escape in a car.

Estelle is beside herself with excitement as she experiences the mad thrill of the young man's getaway but the Professor, in a supreme battle of willpower, frustrates his wife by mentally forcing Mike to lose control of the car. He has beaten Estelle's perverted brain at last!

Miles away, Mike's car crashes and bursts into flames. At the same moment, both Estelle and the Professor experience the dying agonies of the boy they turned into a monster. When their bodies are found, *they are horribly burned!*

The Sorcerers are dead and their misused power has died with them.

KARLOFF IN THE MAGIC CASTLE

Paul Linden

Mr. Linden is an independently wealthy young filmbuff-about-Hollywood who only writes occasionally, and then as a hobby. Several of his best pieces have been published in *Famous Monsters of Filmland,* from which the following feature is derived. It originally appeared in two parts in the September and November 1967 issues.

HORRORWOOD, KARLOFFORNIA

King Boris the Benign of Great Britain last April flew 6000 miles in a magic jetodactyl, in the body of a huge mechanical thunderbird with bones of steel and wings of fire. He came to participate in a reception in his honor given by loyal subjects of his far distant exotic kingdom of Hahliwud.

In a supersecret appearance known beforehand only to a select few, the King (affectionately referred to by his civilian title of "Mr. Frankenstein") was given what was later reported around the world as "his first major press party in 40 years."

The party took place on the premises of the world famous Magic Castle, up the hill behind the equally fabulous Grauman's Chinese Theater where King Kong (in person) once ruled the forecourt in 1933.

Later that evening, as the hour grew close to midnight, millions of Californians learned that the legendary King of Karloffornia had been in their midst. They learned this when their television sets temporarily became terrorvisions, for 4½ minutes of an absorbing interview with the elder statesman of fright films. The newsworthy meeting with Mr. Monster had been filmed several hours earlier.

Scant blocks away on Hollywood Blvd., had passersby known that around 7 P.M. Boris Karloff was just up the hill in the "haunted" house, the inside crowd, consisting primarily of 50 local, national and international reporters, would more than likely have swelled to smothering proportions.

Among the celebrities present I noted Don (Mask Maker) Post, Robert (Deadly Bees) Bloch, Donald (Dracula Society President) Reed, Alex (She Creature) Gordon, Ruth (Atomic Submarine) Gordon, Verne (Men Behind the Masks) Langdon, Mr. Karloff's Agent, Milt (Magic Castle Owner) Larsen—and the Editor of FAMOUS MONSTERS

THOUSAND DOLLAR DECORATIONS

Decca Records, sponsors of the unique event, had decorated the Castle in colorful, karloffull, expensive style. As one walked through the entranceway, the eye was immediately arrested by an attractive banner which proclaimed to the world in no uncertain terms that this was a Welcome to *An Evening with Boris Karloff and His Friends*, the title of the King's new hit album, which he thrillingly narrates from a script written by Forrest Ackerman. "I turned down a previous script that was offered me," said Karloff, "because it was too flippant, too full of whimsy. The narration

I recorded is a straightforward documentary of my life and times in the make-believe world of monsters."

I recognized Langdon and Larsen, who co-sponsored the creation of the record, and stepped up to them, asking "How is the record selling?"

"Like hotcakes in Alaska," responded Langdon.

"Like coldcakes in Africa!" echoed Larsen.

And I learned during the course of the evening that they weren't kidding, when Decca's personal representative informed me that Hollywood's largest record shop had completely sold out of the album during its first week, *before* any publicity had been put out. Such is the magnetic drawing power of Karloff . . . and his friends! (His friends include Bela Lugosi, Lionel Atwill, Colin Clive, Ernest Thesiger, Elsa Lanchester, Edward Van Sloan, Maria Ouspenskaya and Dwight Frye.)

INTO THE INNER SANCTUM

In the lobby was a rare original poster from SON OF FRANKENSTEIN. (*Firmly* affixed to the wall.) There, in bright litho-colors, was Basil Rathbone, poised with syringe in hand; there, bearded broken-necked Bela as Ygor; and there, inevitably, the Frankenstein monster: Karloff.

I signed the register, noting the many important signatures ahead of mine, and then, as directed by the (g)hostess, spoke to the wise old (carved) red-eyed owl on the door leading to the Inner Sanctum.

"Open, Sesame," said I, in the best tradition of the Arabian Nights.

"*Sez hoo?*" hooted the owl.

"Sez me!" I repeated.

And a shelf of books creaked open like a secret panel in THE CAT AND THE CANARY or the rock door in the side of the mountain that led to Murania, THE PHANTOM EMPIRE.

As my eyes grew accustomed to the dark interior I observed a roomful of people and posters. Some of the people I didn't recognize; all the posters I did. The reception room was profusely papered with onesheets, lobbycards and magnificent stills (kind that make collectors drool) from FRANKENSTEIN, BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN, THE MUMMY, DRACULA, FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN, THE BLACK CAT, THE RAVEN, THE WERE-WOLF OF LONDON and many other hits starring Karloff and famous cinema companions of old.

I wondered at the incredibly decorated wall, and how Decca rated . . .

STOP PRESS!

Karloff had not yet arrived at this point so I singled out his agent as a source of information. I had heard rumors that Karloff was in town to make a picture. I assumed it was for AIP. I was astonished to learn otherwise. It seems to have been shot—in great secrecy—on the 20th-Fox lot. A Roger Corman project. And here's what will kill you:

It's called BEFORE I DIE! (Not to be confused with DOOMED TO DIE which he did for Monogram in 1940 or BEFORE I HANG which he made the same year for Columbia.)

And the plot?

You won't believe this!

Like right out of Forest Lawn:

"It's about a 79-year-old actor," I found his agent telling me, "who has specialized in horror films all his career. In fact it's almost the biography of Boris!"

Who could ask for anything more?

(However, several weeks after getting the "inside dope" from Karloff's agent, I read a report in the press which was completely different. The news release made it sound as though BEFORE I DIE were based on the tragic happening in Texas of the deranged student who climbed up on a tower and gunned down so many innocent people. Was the report mistaken or the agent? Only time will tell. In any event, no Karloff fan will want to miss BEFORE I DIE.) [Release title was TARGETS.]

THE GHOUL AND ALEX GORDON

I recognized producer Alex Gordon and remembered from the story on him in *Famous Monsters* how he had been frustrated as a teenager because he was underage in England, to see Boris Karloff in THE GHOUL. By now Karloff had arrived at the Castle and was surrounded by friends, well-wishers, photographers and reporters. As Gordon was just walking away from Karloff's table, I approached him and asked if he'd learned anything interesting he might share with FM's readers.

"For my favorite magazine?" he beamed. "Always glad to oblige. I just talked with Boris and reminded him that I was still searching for a print of THE GHOUL. He laughed and said, 'Well, don't search too hard!' I've heard

it wasn't one of his favorite films. Nevertheless, I'm determined to see it."

"Maybe you should *remake* it," I offered as a spur-of-the-moment solution.

"You know," Gordon said, "Forry Ackerman suggested the same thing to me! It would be great if I could get Boris to repeat the role. And I'd put Forry in the picture too!"

FJA as Sir Cedric Hardwicke—? Ernest Thesiger?!

MYSTERY TITLE IDENTIFIED

FM's Australian correspondent, Chris Collier, had come up through the mails with a title which had the experts stumped:

BIMI.

Claimed Collier: "BIMI was the name of a Karloffilm released in *Argentina* in 1932 or '33." But it is omitted from all lists of Karloff's film career. I intended to ask the Ultimate Authority himself about the lost picture, but suddenly I found my ears pricking up like Jean Marais in BEAUTY & THE BEAST, for Alex Gordon was saying:

"Ah, yes—BIMI. That was like when they took the Herman Brinx serial, THE NEW ADVENTURES OF TARZAN, and put the chapters together into a complete picture, which was released as TARZAN AND THE GREEN GODDESS.

"Or when the BUCK ROGERS serial became ROCKET SHIP or FLASH GORDON became MARS ATTACKS THE WORLD.

"BIMI?" We hunched forward and cocked an attentive ear, for by now 50 people were crowded into a relatively small space, and the hubbub was deafening.

And the revelation came.

All collectors of Karloffilm titles, attention: you may now add this information to your files:

BIMI was the full length version title of Karloff's early serial with Dorothy Christy and William Miller—

KING OF THE WILD!

OLD MYSTERY—NEW MYSTERY

But hardly had one mystery (BIMI) been solved than a new one popped up. I saw Robert Bloch move away from Karloff's circle, his head shaking, a perplexed gaze in his eyes.

"What's up, Bob?" I asked.

Being Bob Bloch, he answered: "A corpse, hanging from

a gallows, fresh for Dr. Frankenstein and Fritz." Then he continued: "Seriously, Karloff just told me something that has me baffled . . ."

"Which was?"

"That he was directed by Lionel Barrymore in an MGM picture called THE GREEN GHOST."

"THE GREEN GHOST? I remember a YELLOW TICKET from MGM but he sure wasn't in that, though I think Barrymore was. He couldn't have been thinking of THE BELLS, could he?"

"No, he said it was the first talking mystery they made at MGM."

"Wasn't that THE UNHOLY NIGHT?"

"I think you're right."

"But where does THE GREEN GHOST come in?"

"That was 1929, in the days of THE BAT, THE CAT AND THE CANARY, THE TERROR and all kinds of mystery plays that were being adapted from the stage. THE GHOST TRAIN was another. Maybe THE UNHOLY NIGHT became the final title after Karloff left the picture and it was called THE GREEN GHOST while he was shooting it."

During his official press interview a short time later Karloff again brought up his appearance in THE GREEN GHOST but nothing was settled at the time about the picture. I am inclined to believe that it was the film I remembered—THE UNHOLY NIGHT—and that Bob Bloch's explanation was correct.

THE VOICES FROM BELOW

Through the din of conversation I vaguely began to be aware of "other" voices, oddly different, oddly familiar voices, coming from somewhere else in the Magic Castle.

My ears took me toward the source of the sound: underground. That thunder, electrical crackling as of a lightning storm or a high-voltage laboratory or both, that distant howling of wolves, bits of dialog such as "I bid you—welcome" . . . "It's moving—it's alive!" . . . "Even a man who is pure in heart . . ." etc.—yes, they were definitely drifting up from the cellar.

Dare I descend?

A sign at the head of the stairs warned that below lay the dungeon of Dracula.

Just then a young couple that I recognized as FM readers came bounding up the stairs with flushed faces. "There're monsters down there!" they shouted to me as they took the

stairs two at a time. "Frankenstein . . . Dracula . . . the Wolf Man!" But then they laughed as they passed me: "All on record. They're playing Boris Karloff's record downstairs in Dracula's den. You should go and hear it. It's great."

I had one foot downstairs when I heard Verne Langdon call out, "Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Karloff is about to conduct his interview," and I hastily joined the members of the press. I was fortunate in finding a seat exactly next to Forrest Ackerman, who in turn sat directly next to the King himself. On Karloff's other side sat his constant companion, his wife.

As Karloff looked up at his audience, seated in a semi-circle of chairs on an incline, he immediately set the tone of relaxed good humor by joking, "I hope my jury will be as kind as it looks!" Everyone laughed and began asking him questions.

THE CAREER OF KARLOFF

He started off by telling us how he left England for Canada in 1909. He first got a job as a lumberjack. The next year, while working in a forest chopping down trees, and getting pretty tired of the heaviness and monotony of the work, he heard of an opening as an actor. "It was in a stock company whose reputation was so bad that no one would work for it," he said. "But I decided *I* would. I left my ax in the air!"

In 1910 he gained experience as an actor by appearing in 106 new plays in 53 weeks!

In 1913 he came to the USA for good. "And, indeed, America has been good to me."

ABOUT BELA–

"Mr. Karloff," a reporter asked, "what could you tell us about Bela Lugosi? Were you good friends?"

"No, we really didn't socialize. You see, our lives, our tastes, were quite different. Ours was simply a professional relationship. But I have warm recollections of him as a fine actor and a great technician. And I'll tell you a story on myself, about Bela:

"It was during the making of SON OF FRANKENSTEIN, the third and last time I played the monster." (Purists insist that he played the role 4 times but I was interested to note –and record for posterity–that the Master himself did not refer to his brief resurrection of the Monster on TV in the *Route 66* segment.) "Bela was a big man, and I was supposed to pick him up and carry him. I put one wrist

beneath his knees, the other behind his neck—and lifted

"I hadn't lifted a pound!"

Eyebrows lifted and a gale of laughter rose at this anecdote.

Karloff continued. "I met Lon Chaney Sr. He did *al* his own make-up, you know—designed and executed it. A fine actor. I think it a dead certainty I wouldn't be sitting here now if Chaney had lived and done FRANKENSTEIN

"I had made GRAFT at Universal and James Whale saw me and wanted me to test for the part of the monster. I had no idea of the importance of the role but Jack Pierce knew, he stalled the test two weeks while working on the make-up and the make-up sold the part."

Don Post commented from the audience; "It was the most impressive, frightening film to that time."

MRS. MONSTER . . . AND THE "SON" OF FRANKENSTEIN

All this while a charming quiet blond lady had sat by Mr. Karloff's side; his wife. One of the reporters asked "How does *Mrs.* Karloff feel about your fiendish performances?"

Karloff was not embarrassed to admit: "My wife is a woman of great taste—she has seen very very *few* of my pictures!"

After the laughter died down, he added: "In fact it was only last year that she saw FRANKENSTEIN for the first time."

The Karloffs are very good friends of the Blochs, and later on Mrs. Karloff remarked to me: "You know, Ellie Bloch and I are in the same boat, so to speak—we're both cowards where our husband's films are concerned! That remarkable Mrs. Bloch flies her own airplane—but she's never seen Bob's PSYCHO or any other of his scary pictures. Says she'd be frightened to death!"

Forrest Ackerman once showed me a photo of a fairly fleshy individual, a sort of Victor Buono type, signed "Boris Karloff Jr." or "the son of Karloff"—something like that, I forget exactly what. I had often wondered about it, being aware that Karloff has a daughter but having been unable to track down any evidence that he had a son. I was mulling over in my mind if it would be advisable to ask him this question publicly, wondering if there were some private sorrow attached to the son and the inquiry might prove tactless, when suddenly it popped out of the mouth of someone else.

The answer was quite simple and caused Karloff no pain.

"Ah, yes," he said. " 'Tony' Karloff. No relation whatsoever. But many years ago this young man wrote and asked permission to use the name, in connection with some mystery stage act he was putting on, I believe, and I attached no particular value to the name at the time so I gave him permission to go ahead."

BELA . . . "THE BELLS" . . . AND FRYE

One very interesting question was cleared up:

"Mr. Karloff, did you ever see Bela Lugosi do DRACULA?"

And the answer, an affirmative:

"Yes, on the stage."

Another question: "Can you tell us anything about Dwight Frye?"

"Not really. We met when he played the dwarf in the first FRANKENSTEIN. I know nothing about his outside life." (He may not have been aware that Frye died in '46.)

Robert Bloch asked: "About your make-up in THE BELLS—"

Karloff anticipated his question. "You mean the Caligari-type make-up," he said. "Ah, yes—that was over 40 years ago . . . 1926, to be precise, I believe. The first make-up they gave me made me look like Svengali, and Lionel Barrymore, the picture's star, said, 'No, that's no good,' and, since I was supposed to be a sinister mesmerist, he went to work transforming me into a kind of Werner Krauss. A marvelous man, a great man, Lionel; so stimulating to work with."

LOOKING BACKWARD

The week after Karloff's party, this story was released by Associated Press Movie-TV Writer Bob Thomas:

Hollywood, Apr. 12—Last week they gave Boris Karloff a party—the first in his honor during almost a half-century in Hollywood.

The occasion was the release of a Decca album, *An Evening with Boris Karloff and His Friends*, which features scenes from the BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN and SON OF FRANKENSTEIN.

The site for the party was natural enough: The Magic Castle, a spooky old mansion off Franklin Avenue where magicians meet. It's a club where diners and drinkers are sometimes joined by vampires and monsters, presumably imitated by Magic Castle personnel.

Karloff seemed at home in such surroundings and he responded with his usual good humor. Unlike some stars who resent being typed in their most famous roles, the London-born actor has always spoken affectionately of the cliff-browed monster he first played in 1931.

"I am a very lucky man," he reflected. "Here I am in my 80th year (he'll reach the mark Nov. 23) and I am still able to earn my bread and butter at my profession. I am one of that very small family of the human race who happens to thoroughly enjoy his work. If I didn't enjoy it, I wouldn't go on."

Despite a leg brace to aid an arthritic knee, he maintains an active schedule. He and his wife now live in a London flat and a cottage in Hampshire, England, but he comes here twice a year for films. During the past year he also made an *I Spy* in Spain and starred in THE SORCERORS in London.

Karloff is now in his 11th year of a *Reader's Digest* radio program which is carried by 400 U.S. stations. He tapes the daily show wherever he goes.

He had a lively run in recent years making horror pictures for American-International, along with pals Lon Chaney Jr., Basil Rathbone and Peter Lorre—"I miss Peter terribly; he was a delightful man and a truly original actor—there was none like him."

"I'm here to finish up BEFORE I DIE, which is a story similar to that campus sniping in Texas," he said. "I also hope to get the script of the next film, which I'm looking forward to. I understand it's a jungle film, and I play a kind of Albert Schweitzer."

Boris Karloff as Albert Schweitzer??!!

Peter Bogdanovich, 26, wrote BEFORE I DIE, to bring "a new dimension to horror." He co-stars in his own script with Karloff. And, incidentally, the title has been changed to TARGETS.

"TARGETS," says Bogdanovich of his picture, "contrasts two kinds of horror, the kind represented by Boris Karloff and the senseless kind so prevalent today—a man walks into a beauty shop and kills 6 people or climbs a tower and starts sniping away. In the past people were killed usually by strangulation or by a knife. Now a machine does it for you. The horror of modern killing is that you can kill somebody and not get blood on you—not be physically stained.

"With Boris I have tried to exploit his screen character." Basically, Boris plays himself! A 79-year-old character actor, famous for a lifetime of portraying horror parts. (Excuse

me—Karloff hates the word. Let us rather, in deference to the grand old star who has so deftly delineated so many macabre roles, refer to them in the language he prefers, "tales of terror.")

A FINAL WORD FROM THE FINE OLD GENTLEMAN

As he concluded his interview at The Magic Castle, Karloff observed:

"My leg in a steel brace . . . operating with only half a lung . . . why, it's a public scandal that I'm still around! But, as long as people want me, I feel an obligation to go on performing. After all, every time I act I provide employment for a fleet of doubles!"

WHEN THE DEVIL COMMANDS

Forrest J Ackerman

—there's the devil to pay!

About one of Boris Karloff's better scientifilms, THE DEVIL COMMANDS.

The year was 1941. Diabolical forces of war were wrecking Europe. Columbia announced that it would make a terrifying Karloffilm called THE DEVIL SAID NO, based on a novel of "shivery excitement" by William F. Sloane. The book, "The Edge of Running Water."

The mystery-horror tale which follows the adventures of a rising young psychologist in a remote farm house.

Against a normal enough background, events begin to take on shape of terror, with a tinge of the Unknown.

A woman dies. Julian Blair, physicist, inventor, disappears.

There is a chill wind blowing—hints of things beyond the borderland of the natural—and there are the strangely believable researches of a half-mad electro-physicist looking for a way to communicate with the dead.

ERNEST ALLAN POE

"It was as if Edgar Allan Poe had written one of his horror stories in the style of Ernest Hemingway," reported one critic of Sloane's previous book, "To Walk the Night," and here was another, even spookier.

Imperceptibly the events diverge from the comfort of ordinary existence and become disquieting, with a touch of strangeness for which no name can be found.

Of "To Walk the Night" (later done on TV) it was said:

". . . a most skillfully imparted gust of chill from Somewhere Else."

". . . an admirable excursion into another dimension altogether, a journey into anxiety and fear."

". . . two strange deaths, a most exciting batch of superscience and a fantastic solution."

"20th century incredulity is forgotten during the breathless tale."

And "The Edge of Running Water" was even better received:

"Cold chills and thrills combined in a most unusual item for those who crave a touch of the unknown, a bit of wrestling with things beyond human ken and footprints pointing to foul play."

FOUL PLAY AND FOTO PLAY

So they wrote a script for it—at first called it THE DEVIL SAID NO but eventually released it as THE DEVIL COMMANDS—and cast Boris Karloff at the head of the cast as Dr. Julian Blair, who had spent most of his life working to perfect a machine that would register peoples' brainwaves and record them on a chart.

Steel yourself for the iron hand of horror! the public was warned.

You'll thrill with terror as Boris Karloff, the master of blood-curdling horror, pierces the veil beyond the grave. What forbidden secrets lie hidden on the other side of the tomb? Will man ever penetrate the plane that separates the living from the dead? Is there any way of communicating with those who have passed on?

In THE DEVIL COMMANDS, these unsolvable mysteries are forthrightly attacked.

Boris Karloff put his best film footage forward as Dr. Julian Blair, who took a giant step ahead, advancing an entirely new theory and creating an incredible electrical machine which helped him probe the weirdest mysteries of Death's domain.

Because his theory was so new, so radical, he needed the services of a professional spiritualist and used one to furnish a living link between his machine and those who have passed on.

SCIENCE VS. THE SUPERNATURAL, THE PLOT OF THE PICTURE

Bereaved by the death of his wife, Dr. Blair (BK) throws

himself body and brain into the problem of bridging the barrier between life and death. His daughter Anne (Amanda Duff) and his former assistant, Richard Sayles (Richard Fiske), become increasingly alarmed at his monomaniacal dedication to his work.

He even electrocutes his own housekeeper in the fanatic pursuit of his experiments.

At last he feels forced to seek the assistance of a spirit medium and contacts the famous Mrs. Walters (Anne Revere). She agrees to assist him in his unorthodox work. But despite every precaution, the collaboration between the scientist and spiritualist ends in disaster. Mrs. Walters sacrifices her own life in a kind of 20th century electrical Iron Maiden.

Dr. Blair is now in deeper than he ever intended. He has committed a series of scientific murders—but murders nevertheless. Yet, he must go on.

He turns now to his own daughter! "Help me, Anne! For your mother's sake . . . for my sake . . . for the sake of all mankind!"

But when his own flesh-and-blood balks at being encased in the robotic-looking metal machinery that has been created to serve as a mental bridge between this world and the next, Blair's patience—and his mind—snap.

The mad doctor attempts to force his own daughter into one of the death traps.

Anne struggles for her life.

Dick rescues her at the last minute.

But the end is not yet.

THE ROOM THAT ROARED

It has been over a quarter of a century since this writer saw THE DEVIL COMMANDS—some of you may have been more fortunate to catch it on a Son of Shock revival on TV—but he still remembers with a rise of his hackles the turbulent conclusion of the picture.

A long table with weird props surrounding it, human forms encased like mummies in metal caskets.

The whine and whirr, the crackling and pulsating of rheostats, generators, coils, tubes, spark-gaps, as voltage energy and high-frequency radiation are forced to impossible heights.

The bodies vibrate and strain in their metal cocoons, gyrate and jitter, threatening to burst their bonds. Loose objects hurtle about the room as though in the grip of a hurri-

cane. A titanic, tornadic force tugs the occupants forward as though into a 4-dimensional vortex.

When the very fabric of space seems about to be ripped asunder, there is a thunderous explosion. Dr. Blair is dead. He tampered in God's domain, meddled with things man was meant to leave alone. A generation ago, in the pre-Cryogenic Age, they still had such superstitious notions.

THE MONSTER WHO MADE A MAN

Forrest J Ackerman

Written on speculation for the Los Angeles Times. *Completed within 24 hours after the death of Karloff. Not published by the paper, which already had a feature by a staff writer. Here published for the first time.*

Some people raise giant mushrooms for a hobby; Boris Karloff raised hackles. For a living. After the demise of Lon Chaney Sr., he became the horror cinema's number one hackle-raiser. He could do it—like no other—with the raise of an eyebrow or an inflection of the voice. Bluebird in real life he was Bluebeard in reel. A terrorific talent.

I was present, proud as Punch, late in 1966 when he narrated for Decca Albums the script I had written for him, *An Evening with Boris Karloff and His Friends.* For the liner I later wrote, "Karloff brings to this recording a rare and singular quality, unmatched in the annals of man or monster. His chilling charm exerts a cobralike fascination, his mesmeric voice laving over the hypnotized listener like that of the ferryman on the stygian river Styx."

His performance, that memorable afternoon of the recording session, was nothing less than sensational. He had it all down on tape, with very few fluffs or retakes, in under an hour.

Afterward, as we producers of his album crowded 'round to congratulate him, one of us asked: "To what do you attribute your remarkable vitality, Mr. Karloff?"

"Oh, I don't know," the white-haired beetle-brown bogeyman replied with characteristic modesty, "just good clean living, I suppose." Then, with a twinkle in his eye and timing worthy of a master comedian, he socked his Sunday punchline to us: "Up to the age of six!"

On the back of the album jacket I reported: "Boris Karloff was 'born' in the year 1931, when Colin Clive, as Henry

Frankenstein, first exulted on the motion picture screen: *'It's moving . . . it's alive . . . it's moving . . . it's alive! it's alive! it's alive!!!'* And that triumph of make-up and pantomime, the Frankenstein Monster, built from bodies taken from the graves, the gallows, the mortuary, rose like a latterday Lazarus, a soulless automaton, a Luciferian juggernaut, to stalk the screaming world and invade the nightmares of all mankind."

Boris Karloff: Night Mayor of Walpurgisville.

But let me show you Another Side of Karloff: "King" Boris the Benign.

One of the best favors I ever did myself was to suggest to Mrs. Eleanor Bloch, wife of Robert (PSYCHO) Bloch, that she include Fritz Lang, "the director's director," among the few select guests she was having at a dinner party in honor of Mr. and Mrs. Karloff in her lovely Hollywood home. (As her husband puts it, "The house that Jack-the-Ripper built.") This was the middle of last year and the late Boris Karloff was then in the midst of *four* pictures in which he was starring in the course of five intensive weeks of acting.

Karloff was then 80 and "junior" Lang was not lagging far behind. I can't recall which of the maestros came up with the description for themselves but "a couple of old dinosaurs" was the affectionate term proposed by one and promptly embraced by the other. Lang, who in 1926 looked 100 years into the future and captured on film the drama of the supercity of 60 million soulless souls, METROPOLIS, and projected on celluloid the salient features of the *Apollo* moonflight 30 years before the fact in WOMAN IN THE MOON; and Karloff, mad scientist of a "million" movies (actually in approximately 150), talked television, war, direction, politics, teenage "monsters" and a whole spectrum of speculation. Karloff's mind was as alert and keen as Bertrand Russell when last seen on television; his dialog far more sparkling as it welled up from him spontaneously than the wooden formulas he was often made to mouth by grade-B writers.

Fritz Lang is a man of decided and invariably fascinating opinions.

If these were two old dinosaurs, Boris was the brontosaurus, the more peaceful herbivorous saurian of the pair; but Lang, long characterized as a Tyrannosaurus rex, a Tyrant Lizard on the set, was as docile with Karloff as a diplodocus that had just swallowed a pterodactyl. Not once were their voices raised against each other or tempers lost

and I sat mainly in subdued silence, content to feast on the cerebral smorgasbord provided by these two titans of the film industry.

When Robert Bloch drove Karloff home, he returned to say that all the way Karloff's conversation had been glowingly of Lang.

I drove Lang home and if he couldn't praise Karloff enough in English he did so in German.

Menace, anyone? It was a real love match.

And now, let me turn back the clock 11 years to the middle of 1958 when I wrote a feature about the career of Boris Karloff which was published in the magazine I edit, FAMOUS MONSTERS OF FILMLAND. With the permission of the Warren Publishing Company's founder, James Warren, I quote that article, following. (Several inaccuracies I take this welcome opportunity to correct.)

* * *

One name looms above all others when we think of the misshapen screen monster who has haunted the nightmares of moviegoers for a quarter of a century: BORIS KARLOFF.

One hundred and forty years ago [now 150]—beyond the memory of any living man or woman, although Dracula and the Mummy probably remember the occasion well—a daring teenager wrote the book *Frankenstein*. She was Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, age 17. [19.] In 1887 in London, Charles Edward Pratt was born, a boy who was destined in his early 20s to cross the broad Atlantic Ocean and, at the age of 45 and under another name, bring to life upon the screen the shuddersome creation of Mary Shelley.

MONSTERPIECE

In the 30 [40] years or more since Henry Frankenstein (Colin Clive) turned the great ray that first brought life into the world upon the body that had never lived—the body that he pieced together from corpses stolen from hangmen's gallows and deserted graveyards after midnight—Boris Karloff as the Frankenstein Monster has become a living legend. Almost a baker's dozen of other actors have at one time and another through the years played the same role, in movies and televersions; Bela Lugosi, Lon Chaney Jr., Glenn Strange, Primo Carnera and Christopher Lee among the nearly 13 different men; but whenever fans of Franken-

stein gather there is only One True Monster for them: BORIS KARLOFF!

Truly, the role of the Frankenstein Monster made a Man of Distinction out of an obscure ex-truckdriver named Bill Pratt.

"How's that?" you say, if you've been paying strict attention up to now. You thought Mr. Karloff's real name was Charles Edward Pratt? Well, so did we, till somewhere else we read (in the first issue of FAMOUS MONSTERS OF FILMLAND, to be precise!) that his name was originally William Henry Pratt! It was another famous "Bill," short for William Shakespeare, who first asked the question, "What's in a name?", and in this case we are now sincerely puzzled.

Along with our hundreds of thousands of readers, we would like to know whether Mr. Karloff was born WILLIAM HENRY Pratt or CHARLES EDWARD Pratt.

Paging Boris Karloff!

Perhaps, Mr. Monster, you will be so kind (if you are that kind of a monster!) to drop a line to our magazine and settle the question once and for all of the name with which you were born?

Frankly, we wouldn't be too surprised if it turned out to be either William Henry or Charles Edward FRANKENSTEIN!

[On October 15, 1962, I met Boris Karloff face to face and settled the question of his true identity. With his own lips Karloff confirmed it: he was born *William Henry* Pratt. Had no idea how the erroneous information got circulated.]

HAUNTED HOUSEHOLD WORD

After FRANKENSTEIN, the name of Boris Karloff became known throughout the world. The "Karloff" he had borrowed from an ancestor of his Mother's, the "Boris" had been chosen as a theatrical first name simply because it appealed to Mr. Pratt and seemed to fit his personality.

Boris Karloff became the new Lon Chaney Sr.

The same year he made FRANKENSTEIN, Karloff appeared in an entirely different make-up as a scarred and scarey, dark-skinned and dumb menace with beetling brows and a great broken nose in THE OLD DARK HOUSE. Charles Laughton, Raymond Massey and Ernest Thesiger were among the actors he gave a bad time in this scream-packed picture. Afraid that audiences would be unable to believe that this was the same Boris Karloff they had fainted from earlier in the year in FRANKENSTEIN, the President

of the company (Universal) wrote a message at the beginning of THE OLD DARK HOUSE informing the public that the menacing man was indeed the very same actor.

KARLOFF OF THE APES

In researching this article on the life of Boris Karloff, we uncovered an amazing fact. Not only did he appear in at least 5 other motion pictures before he made his big hit in FRANKENSTEIN, but it is believed that his first film (a silent serial) was none other than a TARZAN picture!

TARZAN AND THE GOLDEN LION!

Edgar Rice Burroughs' great jungle thriller!

Yes, if you ever have the opportunity to see a revival of this Tarzan production made in the year 1927, look closely and you may recognize Boris Karloff. (There is no truth to the rumor that he played one of the apes.)

[We now know that he appeared in a number of far earlier films, going as far back as HIS MAJESTY, THE AMERICAN with Doug Fairbanks in 1919; THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS, 1920; THE HOPE DIAMOND MYSTERY, 1921, and THE CAVE GIRL, same year; THE BELLS with Lionel Barrymore in 1926 (Karloff played a Caligari-like mesmerist); etc.

In 1927 he had a part in a funny film called TWO ARABIAN KNIGHTS.

In 1929 he appeared in the mystery picture, BEHIND THAT CURTAIN.

THE CRIMINAL CODE was one of the three movies he made in 1931. Late that year—the birth of the Monster!

The airborne operating table descended from the dizzying heights where the electrical energies of the thunder and lightning storm had played upon the unliving body shrouded in white sheets . . . the pale limp hand, severed at the wrist and stitched together, slowly raised itself—alive . . . the Frankenstein monster breathed!

And the audience held its breath.

SNOWBALL AND FIREBALL

Karloff's success snowballed and he became the hottest thing in horror pictures. In 1933 he was cast opposite Bela Lugosi in THE BLACK CAT and played a devil-worshipper with a satanic haircut. The same year he portrayed THE MAN WHO DARED and THE MUMMY who lived 3700 years.

In 1934 Karloff returned to the land of his birth, England, to star in THE GHOUL. Perhaps he revisited Dulwich,

where he was born; and if he did, did the townspeople run screaming in terror, or did they little dream that a monster walked among them? One wonders, too, what his instructors thought of him now, those teachers at Kings College of London University from whom he had received his final education. What had they taught him to prepare him to so well portray monsters? At any rate, he reported to the studio where, in the company of Sir Cedric Hardwicke and Ernest Thesiger, he turned in his usual performance. Boris Karloff would probably also have made good as an ice man!

FIVE IN '35

Nineteen thirty-five was a year of great activity for "our hero."

Burned and scarred and uglier than ever, Boris returned in THE BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN. Charles Laughton's real-life wife, Elsa Lanchester, took one look at the reel-life monster she was supposed to be the bride of, and let out such a screech that it broke poor Franky's heart and he blew the whole castle to kingdom come. Next thing you knew, he was in THE BLACK ROOM.

In THE BLACK ROOM the audience got double its money's worth, for the first time Karloff played *two* roles: he was Count Gregor, a ruthless killer, who lived in constant fear of his twin brother, Anton, because of an ancient prophecy that predicted that he would be killed by Anton. One by one Gregor lured victims to the chamber of horrors in his castle and there killed them. Gregor thought to thwart his fate by killing his own brother before he could kill him, and this he did and threw Anton into a pit in the Black Room. But as a strange twist of fate, Gregor *was* killed by his dead brother—by falling on a dagger held in Anton's stiff hand!

In THE INVISIBLE RAY the touch of Karloff's tiniest finger spelled death for he had become radioactive through contamination by a meteorite rich in radium. He killed his old pal Lugosi before himself catching fire and going up in smoke.

The same year he made THE MIRACLE MAN.

And wound up in 1935 with a repeat performance with Lugosi, in Edgar Allan Poe's THE RAVEN, where he had only one good eye in a half-paralyzed face and twisted body.

NEW SLANT IN '37

After resting a year, Boris returned in 1937 with a series of Oriental characterizations. These extended to 1938 and

'39. He was first seen as the diabolical Chinese scientist who aimed at conquering the world in THE MASK OF FU MANCHU, (1932), and later as MR. WONG, DETECTIVE and MR. WONG IN CHINATOWN; also as an Oriental soldier in WEST OF SHANGHAI. In CHARLIE CHAN AT THE OPERA, however, he was an Occidental villain.

In 1937's THE NIGHT KEY he was a *kindly* inventor for a change, who simply had the bad fortune of running afoul of crooks.

In '38 he appeared in THE INVISIBLE MENACE and then—

FRANKENSTEIN RETURNS!

Karloff got together with Lugosi again and the result was SON OF FRANKENSTEIN. In Los Angeles members of the world's oldest science fiction club turned out en masse to see the opening of the new Frankenstein film.

Time marches on; Karloff shambles on. He makes DEVIL'S ISLAND, THE LOST PATROL, BRITISH INTELLIGENCE, THE FATAL HOUR, YOU'LL FIND OUT, BEDLAM, THE CLIMAX and HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN.

In THE MAN THEY COULD NOT HANG he is Dr. Savaard, inventor of a mechanical heart with which he hopes to bring the dead back to life. As he is experimenting on a volunteer student whom he has "temporarily" killed, the police break into his laboratory and ruin everything. He is condemned as a criminal and hanged for murder. After his death, his faithful assistant recovers his body and restores him to life, but his brain has deteriorated in the process and he is no longer the kindly scientist but now a vengeance-seeking killer. In his mad desire for revenge he launches a campaign of terror and before he is through has caused the death of 6 of the jurors who sentenced him to die. When the people finally corner him his daughter is electrocuted in the struggle and he is fatally wounded. Before he dies for the second and last time, he brings his daughter back to life with the mechanical heart and then destroys his invention.

In THE WALKING DEAD his role is similar to that of the last described picture. After having been unjustly killed in the electric chair, he is brought back to life by a fellow experimenter, and spends the rest of the time frightening to death the men who were responsible for his death.

In THE MAN WITH NINE LIVES instead of Dr. Savaard he is Dr. Kravaal, Leon Kravaal, who has been carry-

ing on research into curing diseases by "frozen sleep." In a secret underground ice-chamber beneath his own deserted island home, after a 10 year disappearance Dr. Kravaal is found by a young doctor friend. Following instructions found in a note next to Karloff's body, the scientist succeeds in bringing Karloff and 4 other "guinea pig" men back to life. When Karloff tries to put the 4 men back into suspended animation, they do not survive the freezing process and die, and he turns a curious eye on his young assistant and his girlfriend. The boy and girl resent the idea of becoming people-sicles, and fortunately are rescued at the last minute.

In BEFORE I HANG, Karloff portrays Dr. John Garth, who is seeking a serum that will keep people forever young. During his experiments to prolong life, he kills a man and is himself sentenced to death. But even in prison, with the help and sympathy of the prison doctor, Dr. Howard (Edward Van Sloan), he continues his experiments. Just before his THE BOOGIE MAN WILL GET YOU.

On and on the list goes. Karloff lisping, leering, loping, lurking through THE STRANGE DOOR, THE BLACK CASTLE, THE APE, SCARFACE, BLUEBEARD, JUGGERNAUT.

In THE DEVIL COMMANDS (available in pocketbook form as "The Edge of Running Water" by William Sloane) he sought to reach the ghost-world of the dead by a new kind of radio, and in THE MAN WHO LIVED AGAIN he transferred himself into the body of another man.

VACATION FROM GREASEPAINT

Once or twice Boris Karloff has left off making monstrous pictures long enough to turn his attention to something else, and that resulted in 1943 in the production of a 317-page book called *Tales of Terror*. In it he gathered together 14 frightening stories by Edgar Allan Poe, Bram (Dracula) Stoker, O. Henry and other masters of mystery. Included were such spooky stories as "The Tell-Tale Heart," "The Beast with 5 Fingers," "The Waxwork," "The Hound" etc.; all guaranteed by Mr. Karloff to send shivers up and down spines like yo-yo's.

So successful was Mr. Karloff's venture as a picker of hair-raising stories that in 1946 he put together a bigger volume. Called AND THE DARKNESS FALLS, it featured no less than 69 "masterpieces of horror and the supernatural" in its giant 631 pages with world famous authors such as Somerset Maugham, John Collier, Algernon Blackwood, H. P. Lovecraft, etc.

FRANKENSTEIN–1970, THE HAUNTED STRANGLER, MONSTER OF THE ISLAND (Italian), THE RAVEN, THE TERROR, A COMEDY OF TERRORS, CORRIDORS OF BLOOD, guest appearance in BIKINI BEACH, BLACK SABBATH, Host of *Thriller*, Host of *Out of This World* (British terrorvision series) . . . all this activity has been seen in his 70s.

Now in his 78th year, the King is still going strong. Next he will be seen paired with Vincent Price in Lovecraft's DUNWICH HORROR.

Just one question: in that unhappy future when Boris Karloff is no longer with us except in sainted memory and movies and television, who will they ever be able to find to properly portray him in the story of his life, THE MONSTER WHO MADE A MAN?

* * *

Well, that unhappy future materialized on Sunday, the second of February, when the most beloved monster of them all went to join his fellow players of the Grand Guignol: his friend Chaney Sr., the original "Man of A Thousand Faces;" Colin Clive, who "made" him in the original FRANKENSTEIN; Dwight Frye, his hunchbacked tormenter; Ernest Thesiger, who collaborated on the creation of his Bride; Peter Lorre, with whom he played in the comedy version of THE RAVEN; Basil Rathbone, who experimented on him in THE SON OF FRANKENSTEIN; and certainly his co-star of so many horror hits (THE RAVEN, THE BLACK CAT, THE INVISIBLE RAY, THE HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN)–Bela Lugosi.

Karloff didn't make THE DUNWICH HORROR with Vincent Price after all–in fact the film, now being called simply DUNWICH, has yet to be shot–but he did do a "spot" of work from his 78th year right on up to the time of his death.

He narrated MONDO BALORDO. Did a voice for MAD MONSTER PARTY. Cracked everybody up as Mother Muffin in a segment of *The Man from Uncle*. Starred in DIE, MONSTER DIE!, BLIND MAN'S BLUFF (shot in Spain), THE CURSE OF CRIMSON ALTAR, TARGETS (an extraordinarily fine performance under the direction of Peter Bogdanovich), and THE SORCERERS, playing in L.A. at the time of his death with full marks from the critics for Karloff's performance.

Still to be released: THE FEAR CHAMBER, ISLAND

OF THE SNAKE PEOPLE, HOUSE OF EVIL and THE INCREDIBLE INVASION.

He had expected to return to Hollywood this year for at least four more films and he had also planned to go to Florida to co-star with Vincent Price and Gloria Swanson in a picture.

For years, for the *Reader's Digest*, Boris Karloff's voice has been heard on the radio daily on stations throughout the United States, relating little anecdotes of interest from current issues.

In 1967 the report reached my ears that the manager of Grauman's Chinese Theatre was staggered—he didn't know what was hitting him. Suddenly he was being besieged by people all over the country—indeed from all around the world—to invite Boris Karloff to join the screen immortals —Pickford, Fairbanks, Gable, Jolson, et al—and have his hand- and footprints and signature preserved for posterity in one of the cement blocks in the forecourt. It was even suggested that an impression might be made of the bolts worn in his neck when he portrayed the Frankenstein monster! *I* knew what was happening: readers of FAMOUS MONSTERS OF FILMLAND were responding to an editorial plea to request this honor for their hero.

Last year the Count Dracula Society sent out a hundred press releases, similarly trying to influence Grauman's Chinese.

Another campaign was launched to get Karloff some special sort of Oscar at the Academy Awards in recognition of his unique contribution to motion pictures.

Neither effort was successful.

The life of a monster is a hard one.

But he has a star on the sidewalk parade in Hollywood.

And at this year's Count Dracula Society banquet—a quite serious affair of expensive plates and black ties and tuxedoes, that in the past has honored Alfred Hitchcock, Ray Bradbury, Robert Bloch, Lon Chaney Jr. and Peter Lorre—Boris Karloff will receive a tribute for his entire career. It is important to note that this tribute was planned *before* his death.

Karloff's last performance in "Horrorwood" was on "terrorvision" with Jonathan Winters for Halloween. Personal acquaintances who knew he had to walk with a cane and was practically confined to a wheelchair with an oxygen bottle always nearby, were astounded to see Karloff practically come *bounding* on stage and perform like a man 20 years younger. He had stamina, that man, and grit. His

rendition of "It Was A Very Good Year" was a revelation. It had been anticipated that the song would be parodied for Halloween—"When I was thirty-nine it was a very good year—for Frankenstein," that sort of thing—but instead he astonished one and all by a straightforward talking version which many considered to be as good as Walter Huston's "September Song".

There is no son of Frankenstein to carry on the tradition: he had a daughter, Sara Jane, who has evidenced no interest in appearing in motion pictures. So the career of the Karloff name closes. The King is dead, and Karloffornia will never be the same.

But you all know how invincible monsters are, and it is my prediction that in 2001, on the planet Mars, pioneers from earth will still thrill to Karloffilms via some form of reproduction yet to be invented.

Mary Shelley's monster has lived 150 years; Boris Karloff's memory will live longer.

THE KARLOFFFILMS
Filmography: Alphabetical and Chronological

NOTE: For fuller information on many of these titles, see the Chronological Listing. Abbreviations used here are as follows: ato, alternate title of; bto, British title of; rrt, re-release title of. Ab. & Cost. - Abbott and Costello. Incidentally, we've counted both the Alphabetical and Chronological lists about a dozen times each—and every time come up with one more undetected title in the Alpha list than the Chrono! It would presumably take a computer (or a robot) to spot the error!

A

AB. & COST. MEET THE KILLER, B.K. (swami)—'49
AB. & COST. MEET DR. J. & MR. H. (Dr. J.)—'53
ALIAS THE DOCTOR (autopsy surgeon)—1932
THE ALTAR STAIRS (Hugo)—1922
THE APE (Dr. Bernard Adrian)—1940

B

THE BAD ONE (prison guard)—1930
BEDLAM (Master Simms)—1946
BEFORE I HANG (Dr. John Garth)—1940
BEHIND THAT CURTAIN (murder suspect)—1929
BEHIND THE DOOR (bto MAN 9 LIVES)—1940

BEHIND THE MASK (Jim Henderson)–1932
THE BELLS (Caligari-like mesmerist)–1926
BIKINI BEACH (walk-on as himself)–1964
BLACK CASTLE (Dr. Meissen)–1952
BLACK CAT (H. Poelzig w/Lugosi)–1934
BLACK FRIDAY (Dr. Ernest Sovac w/Lugosi)–1940
THE BLACK ROOM (De Berghman twins)–1935
BLACK SABBATH (narrator/Wurdalak)–1964
BLIND MAN'S BLUFF (blind sculptor)–1967
BODY SNATCHER (John Gray w/Lugosi)–1945
BOOGIE MAN WILL GET YOU (Prof.)–1942
BRAIN SNATCHER
(rrt MAN WHO LIVED AGAIN)–'36
BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN (Monster)–1935
BRITISH INTELLIGENCE (Valdar/Schiller)–'40
BURNING THE WIND (villain)–1928
BUSINESS AND PLEASURE (sheik)–1931

C

CAVE GIRL (half-breed kidnapper)–1922
CHARLIE CHAN AT THE OPERA (Gravelle)–'36
CHEATED HEARTS (bandito)–1921
THE CLIMAX (Dr. Hohner)–1944
COHENS & KELLYS IN HLYWD (BK)–1932
COL. MARCH INVESTIGATES (Col. March)–1953
COL. MARCH OF SCOTLAND YARD
(ato C.M. INVESTIGATES)–'53
THE COMEDY OF TERRORS (Amos Hinchley)–1964
THE CORPSE COLLECTOR (ato BMB)–1967
CORRIDORS OF BLOOD (Dr. Thos. Bolton)–1958
COURAGE OF MARGE O'DOONE (Can. trapper)–'20
CRACKED NUTS (revolutionary)–1931
THE CRIMINAL CODE (Ned Galloway)–1931
CURSE OF THE CRIMSON ALTAR (Dr. Marshe)–'69

D

THE DAYDREAMER (menacing voice, "The Rat")–1968
DAYS OF THRILLS & LAUGHTER (BK clip)–'63
THE DEADLIER SEX (Fr.-Can. trapper)–1920
THE DEMON DOCTOR (ato JUGGERNAUT)–1936
THE DEVIL COMMANDS (Dr. Julian Blair)–1941
THE DEVIL'S CHAPLAIN (bit)–1929
DEVIL'S ISLAND (Dr. Chas. Gaudet)–1940
DICK TRACY MEETS GRUESOME (Gruesome)–'47
DICK TRACY'S AMAZING ADVENTURE
(bto D.T. GRUESOME)–'47

DIE, MONSTER DIE! (Nahum Witley)–1965
DOCTOR OF 7 DIALS (bto COR. BLOOD)–1958
DR. MANIAC (rrt MAN WHO LIVED AGAIN)–1936
DOOMED TO DIE (Mr. Wong)–1940
DYNAMITE DAN (Tony Garcia, villain)–1924

E

EAGLE OF THE SEA (pirate)–1926
EL COLECCIONISTA DE CADAVERES (ato BMB)–'67
THE EMPEROR'S NIGHTINGALE (narrator)–1952

F

THE FATAL HOUR (Mr. Wong)–1939
THE FATAL WARNING (villain)–1929
FEAR CHAMBER (benevolent scientist)–1969
FIVE STAR FINAL (vil. ex-preacher Isopod)–'31
FLAMES (Blacky Blanchette)–1926
FLAMING FURY (bit part)–1926
FORBIDDEN CARGO (ship's mate)–1925
FRANKENSTEIN (THE MONSTER)–1931
FRANKENSTEIN–1970 (Baron Frankenstein)–1957

G

GHOST IN INVISIBLE BIKINI (Hiram Stokely)–'66
GHOST OF FRANKENSTEIN (Frank clip)–1942
THE GHOUL (Prof. Morland, zombie)–1933
GIFT OF GAB (himself w/Lugosi)–1934
THE GOLDEN WEB (murder victim)–1926
GRAFT (Terry, a murderer)–1931
THE GREATER GLORY (bit part)–1926
GREEN GHOST (ato UNHOLY NIGHT)–1929
GRIP OF THE STRANGLER (bto HAUNTED STR.)–'58
GUILTY GENERATION (beer baron)–1931

H

HAUNTED STRANGLER (Rankin/Dr. Tenant)–1958
HEAD (BLACK CAT clips w/Lugosi)–1968
HER HONOR, THE GOVERNOR (criminal)–1926
THE HINDU (ato SABAKA)–1953
HIS MAJESTY, THE AMERICAN (bandito)–1919
HOPE DIAMOND MYSTERY (high priest)–1921
HOUSE OF DRACULA (BRIDE OF FRANK clip)–'45
HOUSE OF EVIL (menace)–1969
HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN (Dr. Niemann)–1945
HOUSE OF ROTHSCHILD (Baron Ledkrantz)–1934

I

I LIKE YOUR NERVE (butler)–1931

INCREDIBLE INVASION (malevolent scientist)—'69
THE INFIDEL (island ruler)—1922
INVISIBLE MENACE (Jevries)—1938
INVISIBLE RAY (J. Rukh w/Lugosi)—1936
ISLE OF THE DEAD (Gen. Pherides)—1945
ISLE OF THE SNAKE PEOPLE (father)—1969

J

JUGGERNAUT (Dr. Sartorius)—1936
THE JUGGLER OF OUR LADY (narrator)—1953

K

KING OF THE KONGO (heroine's father)—1929
KING OF THE WILD (sheik)—1931

L

LADY ROBIN HOOD (villain)—1925
LAST OF THE MOHICANS (Jules Borney)—1920
LET IT RAIN (bit part)—1927
LITTLE WILD GIRL (villain)—1929
LOST PATROL (Sanders, relig. fanatic)—1934
THE LOVE MART (bit part)—1928
LURED (Charles Van Dougan)—1947

M

THE MAD GENIUS (villainous father)—1931
MAD MONSTER PARTY (BK puppet voice)—1967
MAN FROM DOWNING STREET (Maharajah)—1922
MAN IN THE SADDLE (bit part)—1926
MAN THEY COULD NOT HANG (Savaard)—1939
MAN WHO CHANGED HIS MIND
(bto MAN/LIVED AGAIN)—'36
MAN WHO LIVED AGAIN (mad. sci.)—1936
MAN WITH NINE LIVES (Dr. Kravaal)—1940
MASK OF FU MANCHU (Fu Manchu)—1932
THE MEDDLIN' STRANGER (villain)—1927
THE MIRACLE MAN (Nikko, con man)—1932
MR. WONG AT HQ'S (bto FATAL HOUR)—1939
MR. WONG, DETECTIVE (title role)—1938
MR. WONG IN CHINATOWN (Wong)—1939
MONDO BALORDO (narrator)—1965
MONSTER OF THE ISLAND
(MONSTRO DELL' ISOLA)—'53
MONSTER OF TERROR (bto DIE, MONSTER)—1965
(IL) MONSTRO DELL' ISOLA (smuggler)—1953
MOTHERS CRY (murder victim)—1930
THE MUMMY (Im-ho-tep/Ardath Bey)—1932

MUMMY'S CURSE (MUMMY filmclip)–1945
MUMMY'S HAND (MUMMY filmclip)–1940
MYSTERY OF MR. WONG (Wong)–1939
MYSTERY OF WENTWORTH CASTLE
(bto DOOMED/DIE)–'40

N

NEVER THE TWAIN SHALL MEET (vil.)–1925
THE NICKEL-HOPPER (a masher)–1926
NIGHT KEY (Dr. David Mallory)–1937
NIGHT WORLD (nightclub owner)–1932

O

OLD DARK HOUSE (scary butler Morgan)–1932
OLD IRONSIDES (pirate)–1926
OMAR THE TENTMAKER (caliph)–1922

P

PARISIAN NIGHTS (sadist apache)–1925
PERSONAL COLUMN (bto LURED)–1947
PHANTOM BUSTER (villain)–1927
PHANTOM CREEPS (INVIS. RAY clip/Bela ser.)–'39
PHANTOMS OF THE NORTH (villain)–1929
PRAIRIE WIFE (Mexican half-breed)–1925
THE PRISONER (bit part)–1923
THE PRINCE AND BETTY (bit part)–1919
PRINCESS FROM HOBOKEN (bit)–1927
THE PUBLIC DEFENDER (crook)–1931

R

THE RAVEN (Edmond Bateman w/Lugosi)–1935
THE RAVEN (Dr. Scarabus)–1963

S

SABAKA (the general)–1953
SCARFACE (mobster)–1932
THE SEA BAT (half-breed villain)–1930
SECRET LIFE OF WALTER MITTY (thief)–1947
SILENT DEATH (rrt VOODOO ISLAND)–1957
SMART MONEY (Sport Williams, gambler)–1931
SOFT CUSHIONS (villain)–1927
SON OF FRANKENSTEIN–(Monster w/Lugosi)–1939
THE SORCERERS (Prof. Monserrat)–1968
THE STRANGE DOOR (Voltan, servant)–1951

T

TAP ROOTS (Tishomingo)–1948
TARGETS (Byron Orlock)–1968

TARZAN AND THE GOLDEN LION (Chieftain)–1927
THE TERROR (Baron Von Leppe/Eric)–1963
TODAY'S TEEN (short, narrator)–1964
TONIGHT OR NEVER (waiter)–1931
TOWER OF LONDON (Mord)–1939
TWO ARABIAN KNIGHTS (sheik)–1927
TWO SISTERS (villain)–1929

U

UNCONQUERED (Chief Guyasuta)–1947
THE UNHOLY NIGHT (Hindu servant)–1929
THE UTAH KID (bandit)–1930

V

THE VENETIAN AFFAIR (Dr. Vaugiroud)–1966
VOODOO ISLAND (Dr. Phillip Knight)–1957
VULTURES OF THE SEA (?)–1928

W

THE WALKING DEAD (John Ellmann)–1936
THE WARLORD (ato WEST OF SHANGHAI)–1937
WAY . . . WAY OUT (FRANK filmclips)–1966
WEST OF SHANGHAI (Gen. Fang)–1937
WITHOUT BENEFIT OF CLERGY (Ahmed Khan)–'21
WITHOUT WARNING (ato INVIS. MENACE)–1938
A WOMAN CONQUERS (French-Canadian)–1923

Y

THE YELLOW TICKET (soldier)–1931
YOU'LL FIND OUT (Judge w/Lugosi)–1940
YOUNG DONOVAN'S KID (Cokey Joe)–1931

THE KARLOFFFILMS (159)
Chronologically

1919

His Majesty, the American (Mexican bandit) United Artists
The Prince and Betty (bit part) Pathé

1920

The Deadlier Sex (French-Canadian trapper) Pathé
The Courage of Marge O'Doone (Canadian trapper) Vitagraph
The Last of the Mohicans (Jules Borney) Assoc. Producers

1921

Without Benefit of Clergy (Ahmed Khan, villain) Pathé

Hope Diamond Mystery (villainous high priest) Kosmik Films
Cheated Hearts (Mexican bandit) Universal

1922

Cave Girl (half-breed kidnapper) First National
Man from Downing Street (Maharajah) Vitagraph
The Infidel (island ruler) First National
The Altar Stairs (Hugo) Universal
Omar the Tentmaker (caliph) Universal

1923

A Woman Conquers (French-Canadian) First National
The Prisoner (bit part) Universal

1924

Dynamite Dan (Tony Garcia, villain) Sunset

1925

Parisian Nights (sadistic Parisian apache) FBO
Forbidden Cargo (ship's mate) FBO
Prairie Wife (Mexican half-breed) Metro-Goldwyn
Lady Robin Hood (villain) FBO
Never the Twain Shall Meet (South Seas villain) Metro

1926

The Greater Glory (bit part) First National
Her Honor, the Governor (criminal) FBO
The Bells (Caligari-like mesmerist) Chadwick
Eagle of the Sea (pirate) Paramount
Old Ironsides (pirate) Paramount
Flames (Blacky Blanchette) Associate Exhibitors
The Golden Web (murder victim) Gotham
Flaming Fury (bit part) FBO
Man in the Saddle (bit part) Universal
The Nickel-Hopper ("big bohunk", a masher) Pathé

1927

Tarzan and the Golden Lion (Waziri chief) FBO
Let It Rain (bit part) Paramount
The Meddlin' Stranger (villain) Pathé
Princess from Hoboken (bit) Tiffany
Phantom Buster (villain) Pathé
Soft Cushions (villain) Paramount
Two Arabian Knights (sheik) United Artists

1928

The Love Mart (bit part) First National
Burning the Wind (villain) Universal
Vultures of the Sea (role unknown) Mascot serial

1929

Little Wild Girl (French-Canadian villain) Trinity
The Fatal Warning (villain) Mascot serial

The Devil's Chaplain (bit part) Rayart
Phantoms of the North (French-Canadian villain) Biltmore
Two Sisters (villain) Rayart
The Unholy Night (Hindu servant) [His first talkie] MGM
The Green Ghost (alternate title of above)
King of the Kongo (heroine's father) Mascot serial
Behind That Curtain (murder suspect) Fox

1930

The Bad One (prison guard) UA-Schenck
The Sea Bat (half-breed villain) MGM
The Utah Kid (bandit) Tiffany
Mothers Cry (murder victim) Warner Bros.

1931

King of the Wild (sheik) Mascot serial
The Criminal Code (prison trusty Ned Galloway) Col.
Cracked Nuts (revolutionary) RKO
Young Donovan's Kid (scarface Cokey Joe) RKO
Smart Money (Sport Williams, gambler) Warner Bros.
The Public Defender (crook) RKO
I Like Your Nerve (butler) Warner Bros.
Five Star Final (villainous ex-preacher Isopod) WB
The Mad Genius (villainous father) Warner Bros.
The Yellow Ticket (soldier) Fox
The Guilty Generation (beer baron) Columbia
Graft (Terry, a murderer) Universal
FRANKENSTEIN (THE MONSTER) Universal
Tonight or Never (waiter) United Artists
Business and Pleasure (sheik) Fox

1932

Alias the Doctor (autopsy surgeon) Warner Bros.
Scarface (mobster) United Artists
The Cohens & Kellys in Hollywood (himself) Universal
The Miracle Man (Nikko, con man) Paramount
Behind the Mask (Jim Henderson, dope pusher) Columbia
The Mummy (Im-ho-tep/Ardath Bey) Universal
The Old Dark House (mute scarred butler Morgan) Univ.
Night World (nightclub owner) Universal
The Mask of Fu Manchu (Fu Manchu) MGM

1933

The Ghoul (Prof. Morlant, zombie) Gaumont-British

1934

The House of Rothschild (Baron Ledkrantz) United Artists
The Lost Patrol (Sanders, religious fanatic) RKO
The Black Cat (Hjalmar Poelzig w/Lugosi) Universal
Gift of Gab (himself w/Lugosi) Universal

1935

Bride of Frankenstein (the Monster) Universal
The Raven (Edmond Bateman w/Lugosi) Universal
The Black Room (twins Anton & Gregor De Berghman) Columbia

1936

The Invisible Ray (Janos Rukh w/Lugosi) Universal
The Walking Dead (John Ellmann) Warner Bros.
Charlie Chan at the Opera (Gravelle) Fox
The Man Who Lived Again (Dr. Laurience) Gaumont-British
The Man Who Changed His Mind (British title of above)
Dr. Maniac (re-release title of above)
The Brain Snatcher (re-release title of above)
Juggernaut (Dr. Sartorius) Grand National
The Demon Doctor (alternate title of above)

1937

Night Key (Dr. David Mallory) Universal
West of Shanghai (Gen. Wu Yen Fang) Warner Bros.
The Warlord (alternate title of above)

1938

The Invisible Menace (Jevries) Warner Bros.
Without Warning (alternate title of above)
Mr. Wong, Detective (title role) Monogram

1939

Son of Frankenstein (the Monster w/Lugosi) Universal
The Mystery of Mr. Wong (James Lee Wong) Monogram
Mr. Wong in Chinatown (title role) Monogram
The Phantom Creeps (Invis. Ray footage/Bela serial) Univ.
The Man They Could Not Hang (Henryk Savaard) Col.
Tower of London (Mord the executioner) Universal
The Fatal Hour (Mr. Wong) Monogram
Mr. Wong at Headquarters (British title of above)

1940

British Intelligence (spy Valdar/Schiller) Warner Bros.
Enemy Agent (British title of above)
Black Friday (Dr. Ernest Sovac w/Lugosi) Universal
The Man With Nine Lives (Dr. Leon Kravaal) Columbia
Behind the Door (British title of above)
The Mummy's Hand (Mummy filmclip) Universal
Devil's Island (Dr. Chas. Gaudet) Warner Bros.
Doomed to Die (Mr. Wong) Monogram
The Mystery of Wentworth Castle (British title of above)
Before I Hang (Dr. John Garth) Columbia
The Ape (Dr. Bernard Adrian) Monogram
You'll Find Out (Judge Mannering w/Lugosi) RKO

1941

The Devil Commands (Dr. Julian Blair) Columbia

1942

The Boogie Man Will Get You (Prof. Nathanial Billings) Columbia

1943

None (War, rationing, Hitler, Hiroshito—and no Karlof-films!)

1944

The Climax (Dr. Hohner) Universal

1945

House of Frankenstein (Dr. Gustav Niemann) Universal
House of Dracula (Bride of Frankenstein filmclip) Universal
The Mummy's Curse (Mummy filmclip) Universal
The Body Snatcher (cabman John Gray w/Lugosi) RKO
Isle of the Dead (Gen. Pherides) RKO

1946

Bedlam (Master Simms) RKO

1947

Lured (Charles Van Dougan) United Artists
Personal Column (British title of above)
The Secret Life of Walter Mitty (jewel thief) RKO
Dick Tracy Meets Gruesome (Gruesome) RKO
Dick Tracy's Amazing Adventure (British title of above)
Unconquered (Chief Guyasuta) Paramount

1948

Tap Roots (Tishomingo) Universal

1949

Abbott & Costello Meet the Killer, B.K. (swami Talpur) Uni.

1950

None (Another Lost Year)

1951

The Strange Door (Voltan, servant) Universal

1952

The Black Castle (Dr. Meissen) Universal
The Emperor's Nightingale (narrator) Rembrandt

1953

Colonel March Investigates (Col. March) Panda
Colonel March of Scotland Yard (alternate title of above)
Sabaka (the General) United Artists
The Hindu (alternate of above) United Artists
Abbott & Costello Meet Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde (only Dr. J) Universal
Il Monstro Dell' Isola (smuggler) Romano Films
Monster of the Island (translated title of above Italopic)
The Juggler of Our Lady (narrator) 20th-Fox

1954-1955-1956

None (Three black years without Karloffilms)

1957

Voodoo Island (Dr. Phillip Knight) United Artists
Silent Death (re-release title of above)
Frankenstein—1970 (Dr. Frankenstein) Allied Artists

1958

The Haunted Strangler (James Rankin/Dr. Tenant) MGM
The Grip of the Strangler (British title of above)
Corridors of Blood (Dr. Thos. Bolton) MGM
Doctor of 7 Dials (British title of above)

1959 thru 1962

None (How did we survive 4 years without him?)

1963

The Raven (Dr. Scarabus) American International
The Terror (Baron Von Leppe/Eric) American International
Days of Thrills and Laughter (filmclip of Karloff)

1964

The Comedy of Terrors (Amos Hinchley) AIP
Black Sabbath (narrator & Wurdalak Gorca) AIP
Bikini Beach (walk-on as himself) AIP
Today's Teen (short, narrator) 20th-Fox

1965

Die, Monster Die! (Nahum Witley) American International
Monster of Terror (British title of above)
Mondo Balordo (narrator) Crown International

1966

Ghost in the Invisible Bikini (Hiram Stokely) AIP
Way . . . Way Out (Frankenstein filmclip) Paramount
The Venetian Affair (Dr. Pierre Vaugiroud) MGM

1967

Blind Man's Bluff (blind sculptor) Hispamer Films
El Coleccionista de Cadaveres (Corpse Collector) Mex
title of above
Mad Monster Party (voice of Karloff puppet) Embassy

1968

The Sorcerers (Prof. Monserrat) Allied Artists
The Daydreamer (voice of puppet "The Rat") Embassy
Targets (Byron Orlock) Paramount
Head (Black Cat filmclips w/Lugosi) Columbia

1969

Curse of the Crimson Altar (Dr. Marshe, occultist) AIP
Fear Chamber (benevolent scientist) Azteca-Columbia)
Isle of the Snake People (heroine's father) Azteca-Columbia
House of Evil (menace) Azteca-Columbia
Incredible Invasion (malevolent scientist) Azteca-Columbia

Acknowledgment

Many hands have devoted many hours of work to creating the foregoing Karloffilmography. We have tried to make it as accurate, error free and up-to-date as possible, despite which—being only inhuman—there are still probably a few sins of omission or commission. These we will very happily —with the help of You There, in the Outside World—correct in what we hope will be many future editions.

In the meantime we wish to thank the following, whose efforts in the most part have been responsible for the creation of the present BK Filmography:

Bert Gray
Jean Boullet
Jean-Claude Romer
John & Michael Brunas
Bill Warren
Ron Borst
Gary Dorst
Sylvius Agricola

THE REALM OF UNWROUGHT THINGS

Reika Mings

A popular pastime through the years on the part of Studio publicists seems to have been the announcing of Things to Come for Karloff that, alas, never became Things That Came to Pass.

In that parallel world called Utopia where RUR was filmed after its stageplay success in the 20s and Willis O'Brien persuaded Warner Bros. to let him follow the sensation of THE LOST WORLD with an *animated* FRANKENSTEIN and Leroy J. Pomeroy's test reel on THE SHIP THAT SAILED TO MARS evoked the entire film and METROPOLIS was remade as an early talkie with Conrad Veidt as the Master of the Ultra City and Peter Lorre as Rotwang the inventor of the Divine Robot . . . In a world of richer film treasures such as a Cecil B. deMille version of WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE in the early 30s and WAR EAGLES from Willis O'Brien and TOMORROW from Fritz Lang in the 40s and the NTH MAN and *animated* remake of THE LOST WORLD in the 50s and the realization of

Bela Lugosi's ambition to remake DRACULA in color and 3D—

In such a world we would have the following Karloffilms to look back on, all announced in this world but never made:

DR. NIKOLA
A TRIP TO MARS
CAGLIOSTRO
SAMSON & DELILAH
THE BILLIONAIRE
THE INVISIBLE MAN
THE MYSTERY OF EDWIN DROOD
WAR-GODS OF THE DEEP
THE DARK
BLACK WIDOW
SCARLET FRIDAY
THE PURPLE CLOUD
BLUEBEARD

And Alex Gordon's remake of THE GHOUL and original MONSTER IN MY BLOOD, both with Forrest Ackerman in regular roles opposite Karloff.

"I'VE WAITED FOR YEARS!"

Terri Pinckard

(Ed. Note—Mrs. Pinckard, mother of four, is author of a famous article in *Famous Monsters of Filmland* magazine, "Monsters Are *Good* For My Children!"; for six years hostess in her Hollywood home to Arthur C. Clarke, Ray Bradbury, A.E. van Vogt, Robert Bloch, George Pal, Peter Bogdanovich, Arthur Knight, Frederik Pohl, Donald A. Wollheim, Philip José Farmer, Fritz Leiber, Colin Wilson, Horace Gold, Christopher Lee and many others in her monthly Science Fiction Salons; and, with her husband, Tom, is the official biographer—the work now in its third year of progress—of this book's editor.)

Karloff couldn't go to the mountain, so the mountain came to Karloff. They wanted him in Mexico City to make four films (which, as it turned out, were to be his last) but his doctor vetoed the trip because of the altitude and the adverse effect working in such a height would have on his weakened lung.

So Mr. Karloff's forced acting stint in Hollywood rather than Mexico became my good fortune, for it made it possible for me—and my son, the Star of this little story—to meet the *"Man"*.

The set was atingle with the expectancy of the *"Man's"* arrival. Each person went about their duties; the monitor screen was on and people strolled aimlessly by glancing at it or even standing around looking at the empty set displayed on it. My 9-year-old son looked with admiration and awe at the behind-the-scenes view of a laboratory on the stage.

The *"Man"* arrived. Impeccably dressed, seated in a wheelchair and pushed by a burly aide, the *"Man"* arrived. And the film began. It was inspiring to watch him perform. A glance at the script, his hand passed slowly over the brows and eyes that had haunted dreams of moviegoers, and the lines came. Sometimes he would say them, mouth them, shrug and turn to the director and say, "They do not roll right on the tongue. I will say them this way." And the director would nod, for the *"Man's"* way was indeed smoother, better, more effective.

The break came. He had to have rest. But he had promised Walter Daugherty, photographer of the "MONSTARS", to pose for him. The lights had been set using Forrest Ackerman as the stand-in for the lighting so the *"Man's"* time and energy would not be wasted on preliminaries. Daugherty welcomed him to the set put aside for the occasion and Karloff sat in the chair. One quick flash after another, while Daugherty worked frantically with a camera. It was to be of these poses that Karloff was to say, "I have waited for photographs like these for 15 years."

And my son Richard still stood in awe. Karloff leaned back for a moment. He had been watching Richard from under the famed brows for the last few minutes. During the pause I introduced my son. "Come here, son," Karloff softly said, stretching out both hands to the child. Richard walked forward, the emotion of the experience visible in trembling lips and slight moisture in the eyes. "Oh, Mr. Karloff," spoke the nine-year-old. "I've waited for this minute for *years!*" It was the viewers of the moment who laughed. Karloff took the words as seriously as they had been spoken and, pulling the boy to him, he turned to Daugherty saying, "The next few will be of us together, the boy and I."

Later the group gathered in the dressingroom of the actor. The questions thrown at him were the ones he had heard

countless times before. "What was your favorite film?", "Why did you go into horror films?", "What does your wife think of your acting?", "What was the sequence of events in film X?"

Karloff's voice grew weary and the hand passed over the brows and eyes in what was already now a familiar gesture. He reacted less and less to the queries. There was a lull in the conversation and, gathering my nerve, I broached a question that had been on my mind all morning.

"Mr. Karloff, my 12-year-old is a handicapped little girl. She sometimes feels self-conscious of her braces. If I told her you wore braces on your legs exactly as she does, it would make her feel so much better for she, as all my children, are admirers of yours. But are you in pain?" Karloff's face lit as he turned to me. His voice became animated at the personal interest and question. He went into a discussion of the pain, the difficulty in movement that arthritis had brought to him.

And the questions I threw back at him prompted more remarks. He seemed to enjoy going into his personal life. The horror of a back operation and the bill sent to him for it took all signs of tiredness from his face.

The discussion quickly led to the benefits of socialized medicine and England's contribution to the Utopian need for humans' medical care. We countered back and forth for this was a view I also held.

He led the discussion into the politics of the time and his feeling that the United States, beloved as it was to him, was sometimes betraying its people by not providing for them out of fear of socialism, the dirty word, the word that so many interpreted as communism.

But he then turned to the party system of both England and the United States and each question I asked brought forth a new tirade, a new thought on how each party had grown into a likeness of the other. "When any party gets into power and realizes they represent the whole country, they suddenly lose their extremism, their individuality and suffocate themselves with time-old ways of politics and politicians. It is as though they fear to be remembered in any way different than the previous administration. Not that that was good, but their position was at least known in history; a new edict might be received with less favor." Yet though he found fault with policies, his love of both countries was always in evidence with "They're still the best there is."

His modulated voice had grown strong and definite

throughout the discussion. The face was no longer tired. When the director popped his head through the door to tell Karloff they were once again ready, we looked at our watches. One hour had gone by with one of the most agile-minded, sharp-witted, beautifully eloquent men I had ever been with. The virility of Karloff had permeated the atmosphere of the tiny dressingroom and his closing remark and laugh were to stay in our minds as he said: "Well, I guess we've done all we could today to tear the United States' and England's present political policies to shreds and flush them down the drain."

It had, indeed, been a memorable day. One well worth waiting years for, whether young *or* old.

FRANKENSTEIN FILMBOOK

Tom Mula
Weaver Wright

Probably every reader of this volume owns at least one paperback edition of "Frankenstein." (The editor has 56 different editions.) It was even serialized once upon a time in the legendary *Weird Tales* magazine.

You know, then, how radically the book differs from the film. One fictionalized version of the movie, by G. John Edwards and myself, is to be found in the 56th and 57th numbers of *Famous Monsters of Filmland* magazine. Here is another, edited by myself from the version written by Tom Mula and based, of course, on the Universal Pictures classic.

The Players

Dr. Henry Frankenstein (mad genius) COLIN CLIVE
Elizabeth (his frightened fiancée) MAE CLARKE
Victor Morris (her devoted friend) JOHN BOLES
THE MONSTER (the classic of horror) *BORIS KARLOFF*
Dr. Waldman (alias Van Helsing) Edward Van Sloan
Fritz (the demented assistant) DWIGHT FRYE
Baron Frankenstein (crotchety papa) Frederick Kerr
Vogel the Burgermaster (pompous) Lionel Belmore
Hans the Woodman (Forester!) Forrester Harvey
Maria (the daisy that didn't float) Marilyn Harris

Based on the world famous novel by 19-year-old Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley: Mrs. Percy B. Shelley. ADAPTED

by John L. Balderston from the PLAY by Pebby Webling. SCREENPLAY by Garrett Fort & Francis Edwards Faragoh. DIRECTOR: *James Whale*. CAMERAMAN: Arthur Edeson. SETTINGS: Herman Rosse. PRODUCED by Carl Laemmle Jr. *MAKE-UP*: *JACK PIERCE*.
First released 6 December 1931

PROLOG

A small white-haired elderly gentleman (Edward Van Sloan) steps before the curtain and addresses the audience. "*How do you do. Mr. Carl Laemmle feels that it would be a little unkind to present this picture without just a word of friendly warning. We are about to unfold the story of Frankenstein: a man of science, who sought to create a man after his own image—without reckoning upon God. It is one of the strangest tales ever told. It deals with the two great mysteries of Creation: Life and Death. I think it will thrill you. It* may *shock you. It might even* horrify *you. So—if you feel that you do not care to subject your nerves to such a strain, now's your chance to—well,*" he pauses significantly, smiles, "*we warned you.*"

* * *

The weeping mourners huddle around the open grave. Sad-faced, black-clad old women in peasant dresses and old men, their faces lined from hard work and a long life, bow their heads as the priest finishes the final blessing and sprinkles the grave with earth.

Two men watch the ceremony from behind a grave headstone. One is pale and dark; his wan skin seems to be lit from within as if he is being burned by some intense flame. His bright eyes are almost black in contrast to his skin. Everything about him implies a life of study, enrichment of the mind and some intense passion that is consuming him.

The other man is very small. He turns and we see why. His spine is bent into a grotesque hump. He has thick, stupid features framed by ragged brownish locks that hang down to his brows. His eyes peer out from under them, burning orbs of fire staring from pits of carbon black. He watches the funeral with wide-eyed interest.

The priest, having finished the final blessing, leads the procession from the graveyard. One of the mourners stays, takes off his jacket, picks up a shovel and proceeds to fill the grave. The rattle of earth on the hollow wooden coffin

fills the cold gray twilight. Finally the man sticks the shovel into the earth, lifts his jacket to his shoulder and trudges home.

"Now!" says the intense man to the hunchback, quietly but commandingly. The two hurry out onto the still-soft mound. "The moon's rising! We've no time to lose!" Quickly the two uncover the coffin.

"Here it comes!" cries the hunchback. They hoist the coffin to the edge of the grave.

The pale dark man strokes the pine box like a mistress's limb. "It's not dead, just resting."

Dr. Henry Frankenstein (Colin Clive) and his assistant (Dwight Frye) lift the box from the grave.

High in the mountains, overlooking a rocky valley, there is a crude wooden gallows. A corpse swings at the end of a rope. "Look," says Fritz, the hunchback, softly, "it's still here . . ."

The rope creaks in the wind and the body swings grotesquely, as if still alive. Fritz watches the ghastly pendulum with a dreadful fascination.

"Climb up and cut the rope," commands Frankenstein, holding the lantern aloft.

The dark, stupid features of the hunchback blanch. "Noooo!"

"Go on!" says the doctor coldly, taking no heed of the other's discomfort. "It can't hurt you. Here's a knife."

Slowly, with great effort, the hunchback climbs the rough wood of the scaffold. Drenched with sweat, he reaches the top. He crawls across the crossbar and, holding tightly with one hand, severs the rope. The corpse falls stiffly. The hunchback leaps down, anxious to be free from the deathly structure.

"Is it all right?" asks the assistant in hushed, reverent tones.

"The neck's broken. The brain is useless. We *must* find another brain."

Dr. Waldman (Edward Van Sloan), a brisk white old man who has not yet lost his brain to senility and who speaks with a youthful zest for his own words, is lecturing to his anatomy class. On the table before him are two glass jars, slippery with moisture on the outside and clouded with saline solution within. He is unconscious of Fritz's wide-eyed face peering in at the window and watching the lecture ghoulishly.

"And in conclusion, ladies and gentlemen, here we have one of the most perfect specimens of the human brain ever to come to my attention here at the University." He points to the other jar. "And here, the abnormal brain of a criminal. All the degenerate characteristics check amazingly with the case history of the dead man, whose life was one of brutality, of violence and murder. Both of these jars will remain here for your further inspection. Class dismissed." And he strides from the room.

The students herd out and the lights are turned low, leaving the room dark and empty. The skulls and skeletons hanging from the ceiling move in the breeze of a fresh-opened window.

Fritz scrambles down between the rows of desks to the floor of the lecture hall. He turns and backs into one of the rattling skeletons hanging from the ceiling. Then, stumbling in his nervousness and haste to get out of the room, he goes to the table and lifts the jar containing the normal brain from its place.

The ring of a final bell startles Fritz—and the slippery jar falls from his hands and shatters on the floor. The brain lies in the spilled solution and glass splinters; it is useless now. Fritz's face contorts with fear of his master's wrath. With one darting motion he snatches the criminal brain from the table and leaves the room.

Elizabeth (Mae Clarke), Frankenstein's fiancée, paces her parlor floor. She looks at the paper she holds in her hand, then looks back up, her eyes concerned and worried.

Sir Victor Moritz (John Boles) is announced. He is a tall, handsome man—Elizabeth's former suitor and Henry's rival for her hand. "You've heard from Henry?" he asks.

"The first word in four months. Oh Victor, I'm afraid! Listen—" And she reads, " 'You must have faith in me, Elizabeth. Wait. My work must come first—even before you. At night the winds howl in the mountains. There is no one here. Prying eyes can't peer into my secrets.'

" 'I'm living in the abandoned watch tower close to the town of Goldstadt. Only my assistant is here to help me with my experiments.'

"That's what frightens me. The day we were engaged he told me of his experiments," she goes on. "He said he was on the verge of a discovery so terrific he doubted his own sanity. There was a strange look in his eyes—some mystery. His words carried me right away. Victor, have you seen him?"

"Yes. I met him walking in the woods. He spoke to me of his work too. When I asked if I might visit his laboratory he just glared at me and said he'd let no one go there. His manner was very strange."

Victor thinks a moment, then adds, "But don't worry. I'll go to Dr. Waldman, Henry's old professor at medical school. Perhaps he can tell me more."

Elizabeth accompanies him. The two go out into the storm.

Dr. Waldman leans over his desk to observe more closely the faces of his callers. "Yes," he continues to the two in his study, "Herr Frankenstein was a most brilliant student—yet so erratic."

Elizabeth interrupts him. "Why has he left the University? He was doing so well and seemed so happy with his work."

Waldman continues delicately. "His researches in the field of chemical galvanism and electro-biology were far advanced of our theories here at the University. In fact, they had reached a most advanced stage and were becoming . . . dangerous." He puts ominous accents on the last word. "Yes, Herr Frankenstein is greatly changed. Changed by his insane ambition to create life."

"How—how?" Elizabeth pleads. "Please tell us everything, no matter what it is."

"The bodies we used here in the dissecting classes were not perfect enough for his experiments, he said. He wished us to supply him with other bodies—and we were not to be too particular as to where and how we got them. I said that his demands were unreasonable, so he left the University to work unhampered," Waldman concludes matter-of-factly. Then he adds, "He got what he needed elsewhere."

Victor forces a laugh that dies quickly. "Oh—the bodies of animals. What are the lives of a few rabbits and dogs?"

"You do not get what I mean," says Waldman quietly, leaning forward. "Herr Frankenstein was interested only in—*human* life; first to destroy it, then re-create it. That was his 'mad dream'."

"Do you think we can go to him?" asks Elizabeth.

"You will not be very welcome."

"Oh, what does it matter! I must see him. Dr. Waldman! You have influence with Henry. Won't you come with us? He respects you."

Tiredly Dr. Waldman puts a coat over his jacket and the three leave for "an abandoned watch tower close to the town of Goldstadt."

It is the tower laboratory of Frankenstein. Lights that mount the mammoth machines flicker like the lightning that flashes outside the open skylight high above the laboratory floor. Cathodes crackle and the thunder from the rising storm outside roars down on the ancient tower. Flakes and test tubes reflect a montage of dials and levers and electrodes. A white-coated figure hurries across the Rotwangian laboratory.

Frankenstein fusses over a huge sheet-covered form on a silver table directly below the skylight. He checks the bandages covering the form; re-checks the connections; secures thick wires to two bolts on a discolored neck. Then he pulls the sheet back over the humanoid's head.

He cranes his neck at the skylight. "Fritz!"

"Hel-lo!" Fritz peers wide-eyed over the edge.

"Have you finished making those connections?—Well, hurry and come down; we've lots to do!" The assistant, bent in body and mind, scurries down the single rope hand-over-hand, like an ape. He shudders as he comes close to the sheeted body.

Frankenstein watches him, half-amused. "Fool. If this form develops as I hope, you'll have plenty to be afraid of before the night's over!

"Come on—attach the electrodes!" Frankenstein strides to the barometer on the wall. "Ah! The storm will be magnificent. All the electrical secrets of nature—and this time we're ready, eh Fritz!" He exults. "Ready!"

Huge, scarred and discolored, a hand falls from beneath the sheet covering the body on the table. "Oh, look!" says Fritz, horrified.

Tenderly Frankenstein lifts the hand. "Why? What's the matter?" He quietly scans his handiwork. "There's nothing to fear. No blood, no decay . . . just a few stitches. But look," he beams, "the final touch!"

He pulls the sheet away from the head, hidden in a layer of bandages. "Here's the final touch: the brain *you* stole, Fritz." Fritz looks up at the doctor guiltily. Frankenstein goes on, unheeding, "Think of it! The brain of a dead man . . . waiting to live again in a body I made—with my own hands, Fritz! With my own hands . . ." He sinks into silence.

He starts from his reverie. "Let's have one final test. Throw the switches!" The instruments of life hum and crackle impatiently. "Good. In fifteen minutes the storm will be at its height—and we'll be waiting."

A knock resounds through the watch-tower.

"What's that?"

The knocking grows louder, more insistent. "There's someone at the door," says Fritz in wonder.

"Send them away! No one must come here! Help me cover this!" They shroud the body once more. Frankenstein hands Fritz a lantern. "Whoever it is, don't let them in!"

"Leave it to me!" Fritz assures him.

Fritz scrambles down the wide stone steps. The lantern in his hand barely pierces the centuries-old gloom around him. The cold stone walls magnify his thoughts: "I'm coming, I'm coming! . . . can't come in now . . . coming around this time of night . . . got too much to do!" The knocking threatens to shatter the iron-braced door. "All right! All right!"

The three visitors huddle together in the doorway, barely protected from the driving rain by a stone ledge over the door. Waldman pounds the door once more, louder than before.

A gargoyle peers out at them through a hole in the door. It speaks—"You can't see him! Go away!" and Fritz slams the opening in their faces.

The pounding starts again but Fritz pays no heed. They then turn to the lighted window above the door. "Henry! Henry Frankenstein! Open up!"

Frankenstein's figure blocks the square of light. "Who is it?"

"It's Elizabeth!" He turns from the window.

The shouting resumes and he returns. "What do you want? Leave me alone!"

"At least give us shelter!" they beg.

He vanishes once more and in a moment opens the door. "Elizabeth," he pleads tiredly, "won't you please go away?"

"There's something wrong," cries Elizabeth, alarmed at the steel-white face of her fiancé. "You're ill!"

"I'm quite all right—oh, can't you see that I mustn't be disturbed? You'll spoil everything. My experiment is almost completed."

"Wait a moment," she says gently. "I understand—I believe in you—but I cannot leave you tonight!"

"Henry, you're inhuman! You're crazy!" Victor shouts.

The tiredness vanishes from the doctor's face. "Crazy, am I?" he says quietly. "We'll see who's crazy. Come on up."

He leads them up the stairs to the heavy oaken door of his laboratory. "Are you sure you want to come in? . . . Very well."

He unlocks the door. It opens onto a many-leveled stone room with a high Gothic ceiling that dissolves into dark-

ness as it rises. On the floor is a nightmare of electrical equipment; huge machines dwarfing Frankenstein as he stands beside them; a metal table on which lies a sheet-covered—body?

Frankenstein goes to the door and re-locks it. "Forgive me, but I am forced to take unusual precautions. Sit down, please," and he motions Victor to a chair on one of the raised stone platforms dividing the floor. Victor stands, unhearing, staring at the body on the table. "Sit DOWN!" Victor sits. Then, in a softer tone, to Elizabeth, "You too, Elizabeth. Please." Unnoticed, Dr. Waldman wanders over to one of the huge machines—

"A moment ago you said I was crazy," begins Frankenstein. "Tomorrow we'll see about that."

Waldman reaches for a lever. *"Don't touch that!"* Fritz shrieks at him. The doctor backs away from the hunchback, warily.

"I'm sorry, doctor, but I insist," says Frankenstein, motioning Dr. Waldman to a third chair. Waldman seats himself.

"Dr. Waldman," Frankenstein begins, "I learned a great deal from you at the University—about the violet ray, the ultra-violet ray, which you said was the highest color in the spectrum. You were wrong." Frankenstein leans closer to the doctor. "Here in this machinery I have gone beyond that. *I have discovered the great ray that first brought life into the world!*"

Waldman smiles slightly, curiously. "And your proof?"

"Tonight you shall have your proof. At first I experimented only with dead animals; then with a human heart, which I kept breathing for *three weeks.* But now, *I am going to turn* THAT *ray on* THAT *body and endow it with life!*"

Waldman is more serious now. "And you really believe you can bring life to the dead?"

"That body is not dead. It has never lived. *I made it.* I created it, from bodies I took from the graves, the gallows —anywhere! Go and see for yourself!" He swirls the sheet from the body on the table and turns to stare into their horrified eyes. "Quite a good scene, isn't it? One man *crazy;* three very *sane* spectators!"

The thunder has grown louder, more ominous and frightening. Frankenstein turns to Fritz and at a sign they man the huge machines—great monolithic mechanisms covered with a maze of dials and switches. Frankenstein grasps one of a row of levers and pushes it down. All the wondrous

electrical elements of creation stir to life! Generators and transformers hum with power; electrodes start to crackle; the wires connected to two silver knobs on the body's neck start to smoke. As another lever is thrown, the huge table with its burden rises on a steely column of metal—rises high above the heads of the wide-eyed spectators below—rises to the open skylight, where it stands, silhouetted against the blue-white lightning that fills the skies.

Frankenstein moves to the lever—the one huge and heavy lever set apart on the fantastic machine. With a slow, sure motion he pulls it down—and *all the life-giving forces of nature are channeled into the corpse!*

Then, slowly, the table is brought down to rest on the cold stone floor.

Frankenstein rushes to the side of the body. One hand, limp, lifeless, hangs over the table's edge. All stare as the hand, weakly, hesitantly, *lifts itself to the table's edge!*

"It's moving . . . it's alive . . . it's alive . . . it's alive!" exults Frankenstein. "It's alive—it's alive! It's alive! it's *alive!* IT'S ALIVE!!!"

Victor: "Henry—in the name of God!"

"In the name of God, now I know what it feels like to *be* God—!" And every atom in Henry's body trembles in a paroxysm of triumph, vindication, the ecstasy of creation.

In the library of castle Frankenstein, Victor and Elizabeth are being confronted by Baron Frankenstein, Henry's father. He demands petulantly, "Why does he go messing about in an old ruined windmill when he has a good house, good food and drink, and a darned pretty girl to come home to?"

They offer unsure explanations, suggesting "experiments".

"There's another woman, isn't there? Hah! Pretty sort of 'experiments' these must be!"

The Burgermaster, a fat pompous man, is announced. Self-consciously he enters the room and greets the three already there.

The Baron demands impatiently, "Well, what do *you* want?"

"—Well—when will the wedding be, if you please?"

"Unless Henry comes to his senses there'll be *no* wedding!"

"But the preparations have been made for weeks!" protests the Burgermaster.

"Then let them be unmade!"

Insulted, the Burgermaster leaves.

The Baron turns to Elizabeth and Victor and states, "Henry *will* come home—if I have to fetch him myself! There *is* another woman, and I am going to find her."

Back in the tower laboratory, Waldman paces the stone floor. Frankenstein watches him coldly, gloating over his success. "Come and sit down, Doctor. You *must* be patient. Did you expect perfection at once?"

Waldman turns angrily. "This creature of yours should be kept under guard. Mark my words—he may prove dangerous."

" 'Dangerous!' " Frankenstein scoffs. "Poor old Waldman, have you never wanted to do anything that was 'dangerous'? Where would we be if nobody ever tried to find out what lies beyond? Haven't you ever wanted to look beyond the clouds and the stars? To learn what causes the trees to sprout? Or what changes the dark to light? But if you talk like that, they say you're crazy. Well, if I could discover just *one* of these things, I wouldn't care if they *did* think I was crazy."

"You're young, my friend; your success has intoxicated you. Wake up!" pleads Waldman. "Look the facts in the face! Here we have a creature whose brain—"

"Whose brain must be given time to develop," asserts Frankenstein confidently. "It's a perfectly good brain, Doctor. You ought to know: it was stolen from your laboratory."

"The brain that was stolen from *my* laboratory was a *criminal* brain," says Waldman with deadly revelation.

Frankenstein is stunned for a moment, at a loss for words. "Oh, well . . . after all, it's only a piece of dead tissue," he says uncertainly.

"Only evil can come of it. You will ruin your own health if you persist in this madness."

"I'm astonishingly sane, Doctor," retorts the former student cooly.

"You have created a monster and *it will destroy you!*"

"Patience, patience. I believe in this monster, as you call it. If you don't, then you must leave me alone. I've got to experiment further."

He walks over to a huge heavy door braced with a wooden timber. He contemplates it a moment, then turns back to Waldman. "He's only a few days old, you know. He has been kept in total darkness. Now I'm going to expose him to the light."

He lifts off the mammoth oaken bar that braces the door and silently steps away.

Noiselessly, excruciatingly slowly, the door swings open on its hinges.

A mammoth man/figure backs out of the blackness. It senses the light behind it and slowly, awkwardly turns . . .

Beneath the thick, bulging forehead, from under heavy, immobile eyelids, peer blank, watery eyes, childlike in their innocence. The face of the monster is grotesquely thin, like a single layer of skin stretched over a huge, misshapen skull. The flesh is green, dead-looking, framed by the dank black hair that hangs over the monster's high forehead. A livid purple scar slashes its way across the forehead like a streak of the lightning that gave the monster life. The jaw is split by another scar and beneath the scar, on the neck, are two silvered electrodes. The mouth is a dark gash across the blankness of the skin. And the eyes . . . peer out from blackened hollows; shy, trusting eyes, doelike eyes; no fear or hate in the windows of the soul or on the face that frames them: the monster as yet has no reason to fear.

Frankenstein steps before his creation slowly, warily, so as not to frighten his giant "child". The creation observes him, and awkwardly steps toward this small thing before him. He dwarfs his creator, this huge creature with the mind of a child.

Slowly Frankenstein backs away from his creation, beckoning it to follow. With clumping, hesitant steps, the monster obeys. It is led to a chair on one of the stone platforms above the floor.

Frankenstein motions downward and says gently, "Sit down." Pause. "Sit *down*."

The monster looks down on him blankly, and collapses into the chair.

Frankenstein, elated, turns to Waldman. "You see—it understands! Watch." He turns from the monster and strides over to a covered window. Slowly he lifts the blind and the sunlight flows into the room and rests on the monster's face.

The monster's eyes shine with wonder and delight. Smiling dumbly, he rises, and paws the air, trying to catch, to hold these beams of delight—

And the blind is dropped. The golden rays are cut off, the source of delight is gone. The monster's arms drop to his side and he looks at his creator mutely.

Frankenstein gestures again—"Sit down." The monster collapses once again into the chair. "He understands this time! Isn't it—"

Fritz stumbles in, torch aglow, looking about feverishly. "Herr Frankenstein! The Monster's escaped! Where is i—"

His torch, held in wildly gesticulating hands, comes too close to the seated monster. The creature strikes out in fear, animal panic, at the fire! He leaps to his feet and with one swing of his mammoth arm dashes Fritz to the floor.

As Fritz crawls from the fury of advancing demon, Frankenstein throws him a chain—then the two rush in to bind the growling, angry beast. Waldman helps them thrust him back into his cell and bar the door before he can escape.

Waldman turns to the death-white Frankenstein and says, *"He is a monster. You must destroy him!"*

The monster, chained to the wall, howls its misery to the cold confines of its cell. Fritz, torch in hand, lurches in. "Quiet—quiet!" He pulls a whip from his belt and lashes the helpless creature. "You'll have the whole countryside down on us!"

Hearing shrieks of pain, Frankenstein rushes in. He commands, "Come away, Fritz, for Heaven's sake—you're upsetting him!" Fritz cowers under Frankenstein's words and gets too close to the monster—

The huge scarred hands clutch him and again Fritz feels the creature's strength. Screaming, twisting, he squirms from the deadly grasp. The monster howls his rage and pain at the hunchback and strains against his chains, trying to catch his tormentor once again.

Frankenstein, sickened by his creature and by his assistant, turns away. "Oh, come away, Fritz. Leave it alone . . . *leave* it alone," he cries, stumbling from the scene of violence and pain.

But Fritz, glaring at the monster, rubbing the bruises left by the huge hands, remains behind. Suddenly he smiles twistedly and takes the torch from the wall. He looks evilly at the monster and advances menacingly, pushing the torch before him . . .

Frankenstein, head in hands, sits at the laboratory table listening. Listening to the pitiful shrieks of the monster that tear the air within the tower. Suddenly there is a growl—then an entirely different shriek: one that rises in fear, pain; one that rises from a throat held by powerful, hating hands —Fritz! Frankenstein leaps from the table and Waldman follows him as he bounds down the stairs to the monster's cell.

The door swings open at their touch. The torch on the floor within the cell reveals the monster, grinning hideously.

The door opens farther—and shows Fritz, hanging by his neck, dead.

The monster sees them. He growls and charges!

The two slam the door shut and bar it, just as the monster's bulk crashes against it. The monster screams, and thunders at the door, pounding and kicking and threatening to break through.

Frankenstein leans against the door and says, shakily, "Poor Fritz. He always tormented the monster. He hated Fritz." He appeals to his former teacher—"What can we do?"

"*Kill it!* But we must overpower him first. Get me a hypodermic needle."

"That's murder!"

"It's our only chance! In a few moments he'll be through that door! Hurry!"

A second later Frankenstein returns and hands the needle to the professor. "Very good," says Waldman. "Now you stand here—" and he hands Frankenstein a torch. "When he comes toward you, I'll jab his neck with this." The two take places on either side of the door and Waldman kicks the bar off its rests.

The pounding on the door stops. Slowly the door swings inward and the monster looks out. He sees the torch and lurches toward it, growling, his face contorted with hate for the burning brand and its carrier. Frankenstein waves the torch in the monster's face, which drives him back—and Waldman jabs the needle into the back of his neck!

The monster, infuriated, charges his creator and strikes the torch from his hands. They grapple and Frankenstein is hurled to the floor. The creature falls on him, wraps his hands around his maker's neck and proceeds to choke the life from him. Waldman pounds on the beast's back, trying to distract him, but to no avail. The creator is at his creation's mercy; and it's clear from the monster's twisted mask of hate that he feels no mercy.

A sudden shock passes over the brute's face—he is bewildered, helpless before the attack from within his body; the drug is taking effect. He whimpers, then collapses, senseless.

A knock sounds at the door and Victor rushes in. He stops amazed before the scene of violence and says, "What's happened here? Elizabeth and your father are coming to see you and I ran ahead to warn you!"

Waldman takes command. "Quick! Help me drag this in here." The unconscious creature is locked in his cell once

more. "Henry—you'd better hurry upstairs and get that blood off your face before your father and Elizabeth get here." Ashen and dazed from the battle, Frankenstein stumbles up the stairs.

"Pretty sort of place for my son to be in," grumbles Baron Frankenstein as he surveys the crumbling face of the watchtower. He and Elizabeth climb the rocky path to the ancient wooden door. "Oh well, here goes." He hammers at the door with his cane, waits a moment and crashes again. Victor, his face showing hidden emotion, opens the door.

The Baron blusters in and sees the torch, still burning on the floor where it was thrown by the monster. "What's this? Are you trying to burn the place down?" He looks at Victor a moment, then adds, "And what's the matter with you? You look as if you'd been kicked by a horse . . . Where's Henry?"

Victor says apologetically, "He can't be disturbed just now."

The Baron still suspects Henry of having an affair. "Oh, he can't? I'll soon settle this nonsense." He blusters forward and nearly collides with Dr. Waldman. "Who are you?"

"I'm Dr. Waldman."

"Perhaps you know what all this trouble's about. I'll be hanged if I do."

Waldman confides, "I advise you to take Henry away from here at once."

"What do you think I'm here for, pleasure?" He turns to Elizabeth. "Come, my dear, let's see what's up those stairs." The two climb the stone steps. Waldman holds Victor back.

"Leave them alone."

Elizabeth knocks on the door at the top of the stairs. From the other side Henry's voice comes faintly, "Come in."

She rushes to him. "Henry—"

"Elizabeth—" Pale and worn, he rises from his chair to meet her . . . and collapses at her feet, unconscious.

"Victor—Dr. Waldman! Come quickly!" They rush in.

Henry is aroused with some brandy. His father informs him,

"I'm going to take you home with me, Henry."

"I can't! My—my work! What'll happen to the records of my experiment?"

"We will preserve them," promises Waldman soothingly.

"And he—?"

"I will see that he is painlessly destroyed. Just leave it all to me."

Henry moans. "Poor Fritz . . . it was all my fault . . ."

Elizabeth breaks in quickly, "There, Henry, you can't do any more now. You must come home until you are well again. You'll soon feel better when you're out of here."

On a sheet-covered operating table in Frankenstein's laboratory the monster lies, inert. Waldman, in a surgeon's smock, hovers over the table, watching the monster. He turns and wheels a table laden with surgeon's tools close to the operating table.

He lifts a worn black notebook and writes, "Increased resistance makes necessary stronger and more frequent injections." The monster's body is building a resistance to the anaesthetic. Waldman writes more: "However, will perform dissection at once."

Waldman puts the notebook back on a shelf. While his back is turned, the monster's huge heavy eyelids flutter open. The creature watches Waldman for a moment, then stealthily closes his eyes once more.

Waldman selects the longest of the scalpels on the tray of tools. He bends over the dormant monster and for a second contemplates his student's handiwork.

The monster's great hand rises behind the Doctor's back —and clamps down on his neck with lethal fingers of steel. The other hand rises to meet it and the two choke the life from the doctor.

The creature sits up on the table and loosens his grip on the doctor, allowing the lifeless body to fall to the floor.

The monster climbs from the table and lurches through the inside of the tower, looking for his creator. But the tower is now empty of human life. With a growl the monster opens the huge door to the outside and steps into the light.

The reign of terror has begun.

Henry Frankenstein sits with Elizabeth's head on his lap beneath the flowery branches of the orange trees in the Frankenstein groves. He is no longer deathly pale and speaks no more with the fire of a fanatic but with the warmth of a lover. He looks from Elizabeth and shudders. "My work. Those horrible days and nights. I couldn't think of any thing else."

"You promised not to think of those things any more," she protests.

"Dearest, when will our wedding be?" he questions.

"Let's make it soon."

"As soon as you like." They embrace.

The bells on the churches ring out grandly for there's going to be a wedding in the house of Frankenstein. Dancing fills the streets of the village and songs fill the air.

In Frankenstein Manor, the Baron hands Henry a garland of orange blossoms, saying, "For three generations these orange blossoms have been worn at our weddings. Thirty years ago I placed this on your mother's head, Henry. Today you'll make me very happy by doing the same for Elizabeth. And I hope that in 30 years a youngster of yours will be carrying on the tradition!"

A toast rings through the halls: "A son to the house of Frankenstein!"

* * *

A small house nestles against a shady forest; a lake lies nearby, dark blue in the shade of the trees; in a sunny spot a little girl plays with a kitten. Her father, a strong man in peasant dress, walks toward the forest. He turns to his child and says lovingly, "You stay here, Maria. I'll go out into the woods and have a look at my traps, then we'll go into the village and have a grand time, eh?"

"Won't you stay and play with me a while?" she pleads.

"I can't now, darlin', I'm too busy. You stay here and play with the kitty." He kisses her and strides off.

"Bye, Daddy!"

A little later, the bushes at the edge of the clearing rustle. Maria leaps up to meet her father—and comes face-to-face with Frankenstein's huge, misshapen creation. Innocent and unafraid, she smiles up at him. The creature towers above her and stares at her in wonder for here is one who doesn't beat him or torment him or hate him.

"Who are you? I'm Maria. Will you play with me?" These are the first words of kindness the monster has heard. In his dumb way he loves the child and allows her to take his hand and lead him to the grassy edge of the lake where the water flows deep and slowly.

She kneels down. "Would you like to play with my flowers?"

Stiffly, the monster kneels across from her.

She picks some of the bright valley daisies that grow on the bank and gives some of them to the monster. His face lights with joy at the gift and he looks up at her, smiling expectantly.

She tosses one of the flowers onto the water where it floats, a spot of brightness on the dark surface of the lake. "I can make a boat! See how mine floats?" She drops the rest in, one by one.

The monster drops one of his in. It joins the tiny floral fleet on the water and floats there prettily. Whimpering with pleasure he drops the rest in, delighted with the play and his playmate.

The flowers are gone and he must do something in return, something to show his affection for the girl. He sees how nicely and serenely the flowers float on the lake's surface; how they brighten the dark water. He looks up at Maria . . . and sees another bright spot of color to brighten the lake. Smiling innocently and whimpering with anticipation, he reaches out to her, lifts her off the ground and gently places her on the lake's smooth surface.

Wildly kicking and waving, she sinks.

The monster looks on in horror—where has she gone? Why doesn't she float like the others?—and he realizes she will not return! He paws wildly at the water's surface and then, screaming wordlessly, runs into the forest.

Elizabeth, in full white bridal glory, meets Henry out in the hall of Frankenstein Manor. "Henry, I must speak to you." Without a word he follows her into her chambers.

She turns to him: "Oh, I'm so glad you're safe!"

"Of course I'm safe," he says, surprised. "But you look worried. Is anything wrong?"

"No," she stammers; then: "Forget my foolishness. It's just a mood." She whirls on him. "Henry, I'm afraid. Terribly afraid! Where is Dr. Waldman? Why is he late for our wedding?"

Frankenstein smiles. "He's always late! He'll be here soon."

"Something is going to happen," she says nervously. "I can't get it out of my mind!"

"You're just nervous," says Henry soothingly.

"No, no—I've felt it all day. Something's come between us. I know it—I know it! If I could only do something to save us from it!"

"From what, dear—from what?"

"I don't know! If I could just get it out of my mind!" She turns to him, calm once more. "I'd die if I had to lose you now, Henry."

"But I'll always be with you."

"Will you, Henry? Are you sure?"

There is a knock on the door and Victor rushes in. "Henry! Dr. Waldman—!"

Despite Elizabeth's cries, Henry pushes Victor out into the hall and locks her door.

"Waldman's dead!" cries Victor.

"And the monster?"

"He's been seen in the hills, terrorizing the mountainside!"

A deep, threatening growl is heard. "He's in the house!" shouts Frankenstein. "Upstairs!" They stream up the stairway.

Elizabeth sits nervously on the edge of her settee. Silently the window behind her is opened.

Noiselessly the monster comes up behind her.

Still not aware of him, she rises and goes to try the still-locked door.

The monster follows. He growls.

She turns to be confronted by Frankenstein's creation—and SCREAMS!

Frankenstein, upstairs, hears her cry and rushes back down.

The monster reaches for Elizabeth, trying to still her cries. She dodges his slow, heavy hands—but is caught! His hands tighten around her throat—

The creature hears the commotion outside the door and drops Elizabeth. He escapes through the window and just as the doctor enters, he turns. He growls his hate and disappears from sight.

Frankenstein rushes to Elizabeth and tries to quiet her screams of "Keep him away! Don't let him come near me!"

Through the suddenly hushed gaiety of the celebrating villagers, the woodsman dazedly carries a wet limp form. His face is numb and he stares straight ahead, oblivious of the crowd.

A child's voice calls out, "Look—it's Maria!"

As he passes, the music stops and they follow him, silently.

The crowd calls out for the burgermaster and he steps before them. "Silence! What is it?"

"Maria!" cries the woodsman. "She's drowned!"

"My poor man," says the burgermaster sympathetically, "why do you bring her to me?"

"But—but she has been murdered!" he cries. The crowd screams for revenge.

"I'll see that justice is done!" shouts the burgermaster. "Just tell me—who did it?"

The crowd screams back at him, "THE MONSTER!"

Henry sits before the fire in Castle Frankenstein. He says to Victor, "She's still in a daze—she just stares and says nothing. It's maddening."

"She'll be all right soon. The wedding will only be postponed a day at most."

"There can be no wedding while this creation of mine is still alive. I made him with these hands and with these hands I shall destroy him!" He turns to Victor. "I leave Elizabeth in your care—whatever happens. You understand?" And he leaves.

The burgermaster stands before a sea of waving torches, pitchforks and clubs. "Ludwig," he shouts, "you take to the woods. Those are your group. Herr Frankenstein will take to the mountains. Those are yours. I will lead the third group by the lake." He gives them last instructions; "Remember—get him alive if you can, but *get* him! Search every ravine, every crevice! The fiend *must* be found!"

The dogs, released, bellow along the various trails, their masters close behind.

The lake party pokes through the reeds from boats, their torches held high, for the sun is setting and it is dim.

The party in the woods spreads out, covering every inch of ground.

The mountain party divides, half taking the slopes, the others the rocky plateaus.

The setting sun paints the mountains blood-red—and the monster glares down at the dogs from high above them, clearly outlined against the crimson heavens.

The mountain searchers find a barely-living man lying crushed and broken. "Which way did he go?" demands Frankenstein. The victim groans and points to the high ground.

They swarm up the mountain. One of the dogs catches a scent, but Frankenstein is the only one to see. He follows and is separated from the rest of the party. They miss him and, realizing the danger he is in, call him desperately. "I think he's up here! Quick!"

Frankenstein stands upon a plateau of rock and pauses in his search to watch the progress below. Deliberately the monster steps from behind a boulder. Frankenstein turns at the noise and Creator's and Creation's eyes meet. For a moment they stand, hating each other. Then Frankenstein lifts his torch—

"Back! Back!" The beast tears the torch from his hand and hurls it down. He grasps the doctor and grapples with him. "Help! He—" The cry is cut off.

His cry is heard and the party below hurries to his aid.

The growling monster, his face twisted into a mask of hate for the baying hounds and villagers, carries the unconscious Frankenstein under one arm. He is driven by the pursuers to an old abandoned windmill. The pursuers are close behind; seeking safety, the creature carries his burden into the top of the mill.

He drops the unconscious form and leans over the rail, watching the gathering mass of villagers and barking dogs at the base of the mill. He growls with fury and paws the air, as if trying to wipe away these tormentors.

Frankenstein, lying on the floor, awakes and staggers to his feet, trying to escape. He tries to climb through the trap in the floor but the monster sees him and hurls him to the other side of the room. They stare at each other through the whirling spokes of the mill wheel for an eternity—then Frankenstein makes a dash for the railing, the monster close behind him.

The creature catches him and with a scream of fury hurls him to the ground below. The doctor's long fall is broken by one of the wings of the windmill and he is dropped to the earth, unconscious. The villagers carry him back to his home.

As Frankenstein is out of the mill, the villagers set their torches to it. The monster watches from the railing and howls with rage—and then terror, as the flames lick up the old timber of the mill hungrily. The mob watches as the monster, in a frenzy of fear, lurches through the flames, beating at their fiery tongues, trying to escape. He shrieks his pain and despair as he is pinned beneath a falling timber and pounds the floor, trying to free himself.

But the timber is too heavy and the monster cannot escape. The villagers look on as the burning mill collapses, cremating the hated creature within it. Dr. Frankenstein's dream has turned to dust.

Ashes to ashes.

Series, name of episode, character portrayed, insofar as known.

1949

Episode: Five Golden Guineas

1952

Jan. Columbia Workshop/Don Quixote

1953

I've Got a Secret/(twice)
Who's There
Lux Theatre/Fear/Sir George
Play of the Week/House of Death/Charles Branden
Mar. 2 Hollywood Opening Night/Invited Seven
Mar. 17 Suspense/Black Prophet/Rasputin
Mar. 30 Robert Montgomery Theatre/Burden of Proof
May 24 Plymouth Playhouse

1954

June 23 Suspense/Signal Man/Title Role
Oct. 13 I've Got a Secret
Nov. 7 Truth or Consequences
Dec. 16 Climax/White Carnation/Dr. Philip Nestri
Dec. 25 Down You Go

1955

Jan. 5 Best of Bdwy/Arsenic & Old Lace/Jonathan Brewster
Jan. 21 Down You Go
Jan. 28 Down You Go
Feb. 10 Down You Go
Feb. 19 Donald O'Connor Show
Feb. 22 Elgin Hour/Sting of Death/Mr. Mycroft
Feb. 24 Down You Go
Mar. 12 NBC Spectacular/A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court/King Arthur
Apr. 20 Who Said That
May 1 G. E. Theatre/Mr. Blue Ocean/Title Role
Aug. 24 I've Got a Secret
Aug. 31 U.S. Steel Hour/Counterfeit/George Redford

1956

1956-1957 Col. March of Scotland Yard/Own Show/Col. March
Mar. 11 Play of the Week/House of Death/Charles Branden
Apr. 15 Alcoa Hour/Even the Weariest River/Doc Dixon
Jul. 18 Dunninger
Aug. 8 Frankie Lane
Aug. 13 Ernie Kovacs
Sept. 6 Climax/Bury Me Later/Victor

Oct. 25 Playhouse 90/Rendevous in Black/Ward Allen
Nov. 27 Red Skelton Show
Dec. 11 $64,000 Question/Category—children's stories
Dec. 18 $64,000 Question
Dec. 25 $64,000 Question/Took $16,000, went home

1957

1957-1958 Col. March of Scotland Yard/Own Show/Col. March
This Is Your Life
Feb. 10 Hallmark Hall of Fame/The Lark/Couchon
Apr. 25 Lux Video Theatre/Man Who Played God/Montgomery Royle
Apr. 28 Kate Smith Show
May 17 Dinah Shore Show
Oct. 27 Dinah Shore Show
Oct. 31 Rosemary Clooney Show
Dec. 12 Suspicion/Deadly Game/Judge Winthrop Gelsey

1958

Jan. 8 Rosemary Clooney Show
Feb. 12 Betty White Show
Feb. 25 Telephone Time/Vestris/Dr. Pierre
Mar. 5 Shirley Temple Storybook/Legend of Sleepy Hollow/Father Knickerbocker
Mar. 31 Studio One/Shadow of a Genius/Prof. Theodore Koenig
Nov. 6 Playhouse 90/Heart of Darkness/Kurtz
Dec. ? The Veil/Pilot film for unsold series/Master of Ceremonies

1959

Jan. 31 Gale Storm Show, repeated several times/It's Murder, My Sweet/Boris Karloff, plugging The Veil
May 17 G. E. Theatre/Indian Giver/Henry Church
June 7 World Stage/Vestris/Dr. Pierre
Sept. 15 Reckoning/Shadow of a Genius/Prof. Theodore Koenig

1960

1960-1961 Thriller/Own Show/Host & sometime actor
Feb. 9 Playhouse 90/To the Sounds of Trumpets/Guibert
Mar. 5 DuPont Show of the Month/Treasure Island/Billy Bones
Apr. 3 Hollywood Sings/Narrator
Nov. 22 Thriller/Prediction/Clayton Mace

1961

1961-1962 Thriller/Own Show/Host & sometime actor
Oct. 2 Thriller/Premature Burial/Dr. Thorne
Nov. 6 Thriller/Last of the Somervilles/Dr. Farnham

Dec. 4 Thriller/Welcome Home/Pop Jenkins
Date ? Thriller/Friend of the Dead/Col. Jackson

1962

Out of This World/Own BBC-TV show/Host
Feb. 5 Hallmark Hall of Fame/Arsenic & Old Lace/J. Brewster
Feb. 12 P.M.
Feb. 26 Thriller/The Incredible Doktor Markesan/Dr. Konrad Markesan
Mar. 11 Theatre 62/The Paradine Case/Sir Simon Flauger

1963

Oct. The Teenager—20th Century-Fox Movietone News/ Narrator
Dec. Chronicle/A Danish Fairy Tale/Narrator

1964

Apr. Gary Moore Show
June Tonight

1965

Jan. Entertainers
Oct. Shindig

1966

Apr. Wild Wild West/Night of the Golden Cobra
May How the Grinch Stole Christmas/MGM annual special /voice of cartoon villain
June The Girl From U.N.C.L.E./Mother Muffin Affair/Mother Muffin
Oct. I Spy/The Plains in Spain

1968

Sept. Red Skelton Show
Sept. The Name of the Game/The White Birch
Last Act: October. Featured in the Jonathan Winters Show for Halloween, where he "stalked" (sang & talked) the song "It Was A Very Good Year"—and gave Sinatra reason to fear! Final role: Frankenscientist.

* * *

HIS TV COMMERCIALS

1966

May Butternut Coffee
June Schaeffer Pen

1967

Nov. Volkswagen

1968

Ronson
A-1 Sauce (Mad Saucentist)

THE KING AND i

Forrest J Ackerman

My First Interview with Him (1963)

Next to Lon Chaney Sr., whom I never met, for years the man in monsterdom that I most wanted to meet was Boris Karloff. It was not enough that I had once seen him briefly backstage after a performance in ON BORROWED TIME and acquired his autograph on a copy of the anthology he engineered, "And the Darkness Falls." It was not enough that once in my life I saw Peter Lorre, stood next to Charles Laughton, watched Lon Chaney Jr. act, observed Basil Rathbone on a set, regarded a funeral bed on which Colin Clive lay dead, called Tor Johnson "friend," have seen Elsa Lanchester and Rod Serling and Fritz Lang and Brigitte Helm and John Carradine and Frederic March (Dr. Jekyll) and Spencer Tracy (Mr. Hyde) in person, been in Vincent Price's home, saw Dwight Frye on the stage in DRACULA, and that Bela Lugosi and I were friends while the final curtain was slowly descending on his life.

No, above all else I always wanted to really *meet* Boris Karloff, to converse with him a short time, to express my appreciation to him for the pleasure he has given me in the past 30 years.

Jim Nicholson of American-International was thoughtful enough to arrange it for me late last year. It was during the filming of THE RAVEN. Sam Sherman, editorial director of *SCREEN THRILLS ILLUSTRATED*, was visiting Hollywood from New York, and I took him along to the studio with me. It was Sam who first spotted Karloff. He suddenly nudged me and said, "There he goes now. Now's your opportunity. You can catch him in his dressingroom."

i MEET MY FAVORITE

I high-tailed it to the cubicle into which Mr. Karloff had just vanished. He had just eased himself into a chair when I approached the open door of the little room and, placing one foot on the first stair and inserting my head part way into the room, I asked, "Would it be alright to come in a moment?"

He was very gracious. "Why, yes, of course," he said, his world-famous voice sounding just as it had in THE BLACK

CAT, THE INVISIBLE RAY, THE MUMMY and so many others.

I introduced myself as the editor of *FAMOUS MONSTERS*.

"I have a set of your magazines," he replied. This neither flattered nor surprised me as I had visited the set a few days earlier, missed him, and left the magazines in a package on a table for him.

"I have enjoyed your pictures for over 30 years," I said. "Since FRANKENSTEIN—that was about 1931, wasn't it?"

"Yes," he said, "that was about the beginning of it." I knew that, historically speaking, his statement was far from accurate, for it is recorded that in 1919 he was in the Doug Fairbanks film HIS MAJESTY, THE AMERICAN . . . acted in Kosmik Films' 15-part serial THE HOPE DIAMOND MYSTERY in 1921 and, the same year, appeared in THE CAVE GIRL . . . etc. However, I knew what he meant, that figuratively speaking his career began with his immortal portrayal of the Frankenstein monster, and I did not make a point of questioning his statement.

Just then someone opened the door and called him away momentarily to answer the phone. I took advantage of his temporary absence to soak in the atmosphere, to realize that I was sitting in *the dressingroom of Boris Karloff* and that in a few minutes he, like his indestructible monster, would return!

THE RETURN OF KARLOFF

When Mr. Karloff did indeed return, I asked him about THE BELLS. "Ah, yes," he replied, "the silent film with Lionel Barrymore. I played a strange physician in it, a practitioner of mesmerism." We might have discussed the picture and others of his early performances but at that moment another individual appeared at his door, a man who turned out to be a mutual friend, producer Alex Gordon. As I recall (and it is too late at 2 o'clock in the morning as I type these words to call and double check it) Alex' brother produced the British Karloffilm CORRIDORS OF BLOOD that is about to be released in this country. Alex and Boris chatted briefly and then it was time for Mr. Karloff to enact a scene—Roger Corman was calling for him on the set.

THE SHOCK OF MY LIFE

I have seen Karloff in roles like the original RAVEN where he was quite twisted and THE TOWER OF LONDON where he had the bandy legs and club foot and in

THE BLACK ROOM but from his TV appearances as host of *Thriller* I thought of him as standing quite erect, very tall and straight. It was, therefore, a terrific shock to me to observe how truly bent he is in real life. It seemed to me that, walking naturally, he was almost more doubled over, more crablike in his appearance than I had ever seen him when putting on an act on the screen. At that moment I felt a great compassion for him; in a telepathic world he would have heard in his head a sincerely meant message from me that would have said, "*Dear* Mr. Karloff, much as I personally love you and want you to live forever and go on acting forever, *I* wouldn't ask you to go on acting at the age of 75." I wondered why he wasn't 6000 miles away with his wife, sitting comfortably in front of his hearth in his home in England, instead of here on this sound stage, about to climb, unaided, a steep flight of stairs, then have to clamber up some rubble.

The scene he was about to shoot was practically the end of the picture. It was just after the grand explosion following the duel of wizards. Dust and debris were still falling out of the air (studio workers studiously pumping vile vapors in his direction). He did the scene where he tried to repair or change a dress for his wife by a wave of his hand; unsuccessful, he bowed his head and said, "I guess I just don't have it any more."

ASTUTE OBSERVATION

A voice at my side spoke. I had been so engrossed in watching Boris Karloff act that for the moment I had half-forgotten the presence of my friend and fellow editor by my side. ". . . just don't have it any more" was echoing in my ears when Sam Sherman commented to me under his voice, "Oh *yes* he does!" And it is indeed true. At 75, Boris Karloff has lost none of his touch, his magic, his mesmeric attraction—if anything, I would say after witnessing his performance in THE RAVEN that he is more powerful than ever.

LAST MINUTES WITH MY MASTER

He autographed my photoplay edition of FRANKENSTEIN and let Sam and me pose for pictures with him, then he sat on a stool, reading some "wild lines," hamming it up, enjoying himself hugely and making me feel that apparently I was wrong in feeling concern about him. Despite his shortness of breath, the arthritis or whatever it is that curves him so cruelly, he obviously was having fun. Unlike

Lugosi, that poor old narcotic-ruined shell of a man in the last years of his life, it is evident that Mr. Karloff does not have to keep going for financial reasons. Like today's elder statesman of singers, Maurice Chevalier, Boris Karloff evidently continues his motion picture and TV career primarily because he loves his work, his fans.

Before flying back over the North Pole to home, he made one more picture now awaiting release: THE TERROR, in color. He'll be back later on this year, for further roles with Lorre and Price.

If and when you read the lines of this interview, Dear Sir, I want again to say "thank you." My hat's off to you, my head's in the clouds and my heart's wishing you all the warmest. In these sentiments I'm sure well over a hundred thousand readers of this magazine simultaneously join me.

In chorus we say: *"O King, live forever!"*

WHEN THE AIRWAVES TREMBLED

Karloff on Radio

Donald F. Glut

The extensive career of Boris Karloff overlapped into numerous media—motion pictures, television, phonograph records, the legitimate stage and literature. However, one important outlet of his talents has been almost completely ignored. The fact that Karloff was also a popular actor appearing on "old time" dramatic radio has been rather overlooked by the same fans who followed his every new film with almost fanatic fervor.

Radio drama, which peaked during the 1930s and 40s, was most successful for the very reason that people today too young to remember cannot understand.

There were no pictures!

And that was exactly the forte of radio drama. You couldn't see what was going on; you were required to *visualize* the action in that greatest of all studio and screening rooms—the imagination. And what the human mind can recreate is more exciting, more realistic and more *terrifying* than any motion picture or television show.

Boris Karloff was well suited for radio acting. His voice,

extremely pliable, could either convey the plight of a sympathetic scientist or the horror of a raving maniac.

In a particular episode of *Lights Out,* Karloff portrayed Darrell Hall, a man convicted of murder. As he waited in a courtroom for the jury to return with the verdict upon which his very existence depended we heard that familiar lisping voice:

HALL: Guilty . . . Not Guilty . . . Guilty . . . Not Guilty . . . Guilty! Father in heaven, why don't I stop thinking those words?! Words those jurymen are saying. (MONTAGE OF VOICES SAYING "GUILTY" . . . "NOT GUILTY") No, no, I've got to stop thinking of what's going on in that room! The jurymen! I've got to stop thinking of them! I've got to get my head clear. I've got to figure things out!

Boris Karloff played the husband of a female lycanthrope in a 1938 episode of this half hour radio series. In this case, however, the monster was not a vicious werewolf but an equally vicious were-cat. "Cat Wife." In this play written for radio by Arch Oboler, Karloff played John Taylor, a man married to an unloving and "catty" woman, Linda. When Taylor repeatedly shouted that she was not even a real woman but a cat, an astounding thing happened: Linda literally was transformed into a screeching cat! Taylor's personality then underwent a change. Still loving the cat that had once been his beautiful spouse, he had to keep her existence secret—do *anything* to protect her, even murder those who learned the terrible truth.

TAYLOR: You've got to do something, doctor! (SOUND OF CAT) You've got to! You're my friend. You've got to help me!

DOCTOR: What? In the name of all that is rational what?

TAYLOR: (CRYING) There must be something you can do. A drug . . . something! Anything!

DOCTOR: No, John. I don't know what to say. I can't think . . . I'll call in someone else. That's it! I'll inform the authorities. They'll take care of everything.

TAYLOR: No, wait!

DOCTOR: What is it? What's the matter?

TAYLOR: You're going to inform the authorities?

Taylor's entire approach changes when the doctor reveals his plan, to make Linda a scientific curiosity, a specimen for study. He cannot allow his beloved wife to become a mere oddity, an object of medical research. In one of the only performances in which he overacted, which was a convention of radio drama, Karloff retaliates:

TAYLOR: Science! Who cares about science? She's Linda! She's my wife! It's *my* shame! Mine! And you're not going to tell a living soul about it! No one, you hear me! No one!

DOCTOR: It's my duty, John. I must inform the authorities.

TAYLOR: Keep away from that phone. Keep away, I say!

DOCTOR: I'm sorry, John. (GUNSHOT) Aaaggghhh . . . (WHISPERING) John . . . my friend . . .

Then, the famous gong that symbolized a fadeout on *Lights Out* climaxed the scene.

Taylor's attempts to conceal his wife result in more murder. His own mind steadily deteriorates as neighborhood merchants torment him, asking his reasons for purchasing more milk, more liver. A butcher remarks that Taylor must be feeding a cat and should start catching mice. Taylor's sanity is entirely shattered when, in a rage, the yowling monster claws out his eyes! Still bound to Linda through some bizarre semblance of love, Taylor gropes around in the darkness for a gun, kills her, then himself so that the two might remain together in death.

Joseph Kesselring's comedy play, ARSENIC AND OLD LACE, was dramatized at least once on radio. Boris Karloff, as Jonathan Brewster, the sadistic madman who through surgery was made to look like Boris Karloff, was back in the role he made famous on the Broadway stage. The play was broadcast in 1940 on a program with an exceptionlly long title–*The U. S. Steel Hour Presents the Theatre Guild on the Air*. Karloff also appeared in comedy sketches on radio during the 1940s, including *The Bob Hope Show*. Hope, in one instance, acted the coward to Karloff's audible villainy.

It was in straight horror, naturally, that Karloff's fans wanted him most of all, though his comedy performances were always welcomed. In 1941, Karloff played the part of Simon, a deaf musician, in an *Inner Sanctum* adaptation of Edgar Allan Poe's short classic, "The Telltale Heart."

Simon's friend Oliver, an old man with a hatred for everyone and everything, kills a swallow. The kindly Simon, however, is aghast at so horrible a crime. And in order to stop the malignant infection of Oliver's evil from spreading, Simon kills him and hides the body under the floor. Just as the grim task has been completed, there is a knock at the door. It is, ironically, the constable. The deaf man, reading the policeman's lips, converses with him, trying to explain the new work that has been done to the wooden floor. Then . . .

in his tortured brain . . . Simon *hears* the monotonous *thump thump thump* of . . .

Oliver's heart!

His Telltale Heart, beating from under the floorboards!

Again, Karloff begins to rave, arousing even more suspicions in the inquiring constable.

CONSTABLE: Well, I'll just sit down here for a minute.

SIMON: No, no! Not there! Don't sit there! It's . . . just that the floor . . . looked a little rotten right here, and I was afraid that . . . oh, I guess it's all right.

CONSTABLE: Yes. Strong enough to hold me, anyway.

(SOUND OF CRACKING TIMBERS).

SIMON: No! Look out! Good heavens! What's that?

CONSTABLE: What's what?

SIMON: That thumping! That noise!

CONSTABLE: I don't hear any noise.

SIMON: But you must!

But Simon hears . . . or at least believes he hears the noise, resembling some monstrous metronome. And as every second, every heartbeat ticks by, the deaf man's mind dissolves.

CONSTABLE: There's no need to get so excited.

SIMON: I'm not excited! I'm perfectly calm!

CONSTABLE: I told you . . .

SIMON: I know what you told me . . . sitting there, pretending you haven't heard, making me stay here and listen to it! Getting louder and *louder* and *LOUDER!* I confess! *I killed him!* His body is right underneath you, under that floor! I killed him! (SOBBING) And that noise you hear is his heart! His *telltale heart!*

Thus, Simon, deaf, mad and guilty of murder is taken away; and the immortal creaking door closed on another chilling *Inner Sanctum* tale.

Although the Golden Age of Dramatic Radio was eradicated by television, Karloff continued to broadcast over the airwaves. As late as the 1960s the stirring voice of the fine actor was heard in a daily *Reader's Digest* one minute per episode radio series heard all over the United States. In this series, Karloff was no longer the madman, but the announcer and cast all in one, relating dramatic anecdotes about the lives of famous people, like the great physicist Albert Einstein.

Boris Karloff's career as a radio actor was brief when compared to his long list of motion pictures. And yet his radio roles convey a profound significance:

Boris Karloff did not require the heavy eyelids and silver

electrodes of Frankenstein's creation, nor the wrinkles and wrappings of the Mummy, to be frightening. Like the Invisible Man he almost once played in movies, he could panic or petrify without even being seen. With just—his voice.

FASCINATING KARLOFF FACTS

Bill Warren

In 1948 Universal Pictures paid Karloff's hotel bill in New York City to get publicity shots of him staring curiously at the marquee for ABBOTT & COSTELLO MEET FRANKENSTEIN. He said okay—"as long as I don't have to see the movie."

* * *

Karloff said in a 1958 interview with Cecil Smith for the LA *Times* that he (Karloff) discovered the story, "Strangle-hold," filmed as THE HAUNTED STRANGLER.

* * *

Was set to play the wicked king of the Philistines in Cecil B. DeMille's SAMSON & DELILAH but for some reason not now known the role went to another.

* * *

In a 1962 interview with Hal Humphrey for LA *Times*, said: "Actually we should all hang our heads in shame today when it comes to the art of special make-up. No one compares with the old Lon Chaney. He was the master and he did his own make-up for every one of his roles. Here I am, dozing off in the barber chair, while someone else applies the stuff."

* * *

In nearly every lengthy interview paid full respects to Jack Pierce, creator of his classic make-ups.

* * *

Karloff once performed at a lunatic asylum while in stock, pre-films.

* * *

Professional stage debut was in Molnar's *The Devil.* Karloff had been signed, unseen, at $30 a week. "When they got a look at my acting," he later reported, "they cut my salary in half!"

* * *

FRANKENSTEIN, made in 1931, cost Universal $275,000. By 1955 it had grossed $12 million!

* * *

"It's complete nonsense," he said in a review in the LA *Mirror News* of January 23, 1958, "that the monster pictures can hurt children. These films are so obviously outside anyone's personal experience that they can't harm anyone, including the youngsters. Violence, rape and murder can happen on your street. But you aren't apt to walk into a monster tonight."

* * *

LA *Daily News*, April 10, 1950: ". . . I feel strongly against censorship of all kinds . . . Parents should be the judges of what their children see and hear in the home."

* * *

Boris Karloff is one of the 96 Hollywood greats immortalized at Movieland Wax Museum, the Stars' Hall of Fame.

THE HOUSE AT THE END OF THE WORLD

Peter J. Jarman

British journalist, 1966

That morning I had spent on the set of THE HOUSE AT THE END OF THE WORLD, watching filming on this brand new Karloffilm. Following lunch, at the exit to the restaurant I breathlessly caught up with Boris.

"I've waited for years for this moment," I told him.

"It is very kind of you to have travelled so far" (Six hours' journey from my home) "to see me," he smiled. "I'll be waiting for you in my dressingroom in five minutes."

Back into the shadows of the set and I was soon being ushered into the Karloff dressingroom where the gentle and courteous Master of Screen Terror apologized for not getting up because of his arthritic knee. "It's done a lot of mileage, you know."

He told me he had read the current copies of FAMOUS MONSTERS and MONSTER WORLD which I had posted him in advance. "I read them with great interest," he said, "but as much as I appreciated the birthday wishes of all the readers, as expressed by Editor Ackerman, that I should live for ever . . ." He trailed off, shaking his head with a smile. Only the other day when an enterprising show house had screened Boris' original FRANKENSTEIN, he had sent the manager a message which read, "It's nothing short of a scandal that, after all these years, I am still around to be able to send you my best wishes . . . !"

Boris and I talked of many things, of my friends Peter Cushing and Christopher Lee and others. "Very good actors," he said, "but I've never seen any of the new FRANKENSTEIN or DRACULA films. I'm sure they're done quite well but there is a modern tendency with the so-called horror film—and I prefer the word terror to horror—to introduce shocks just for their own sake. This I believe to be wrong. Shocks should evolve naturally from the situations and story. They should not be forced into a film without excuse."

I was soon weighing down the Karloff lap with a pile of my treasured publicity pressbooks and stills of old Karloffilms which he patiently examined, autographed and commented on nostalgically. I showed him the original pressbook for THE BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN. "Dear Una O'Connor—dear old Ernest Thesiger and James Whale," he said reflectively, thinking of his friends who had passed away.

Then we came to a tattered sheet of his 1934 BLACK CAT with Bela Lugosi and I asked him how he enjoyed working with Bela in so many films.

"Very much indeed," he replied. "Bela was a great technician—he was worth a lot more than he got. Poor Bela, he had a very tragic life you know. A very sad life. He was a charming man but in some ways a fool to himself."

Boris continued: "He never took the trouble to master the English language to the degree he should have done. When he got to America he surrounded himself with his Hungarian friends and was quite content to do so. I mean, look at Peter Lorre. He was Hungarian yet he mastered English almost to perfection. But Bela was a kind and lovable man and I remember our work together with affection."

KARLOFF ON KARLOFF

I noted that Boris had been recently quoted as saying "I am never really alive unless I am at work, merely recharging for the next spell. To know that I was never to act again would be something akin to the death sentence for me."

"Perfectly true," Boris told me. "I am a very lucky man to be able to work at my age." (His 78th year.) "And I'm very lucky that people still seem to want me."

Were there any particular favorites among all his films? I asked. "Not really," he replied. "I've half forgotten lots of them. If I had to choose a favorite I suppose it would be the first FRANKENSTEIN because it was such a lucky film for me—and I think rather a good one."

"Of course it was all an accident, being given the role

of the Monster by Jimmy Whale, the director, in 1931 and getting labelled for macabre assignments from then on because of it," smiled Boris. "I didn't set out to chill anyone, I was just an actor willing to try anything. I had no special interest in terror subjects. My private tastes are still very catholic."

STRANGE CONFESSION

Boris confessed that he hardly ever sees any of his films until they are *about three years old!* "I always refuse to see the rushes at the studio and I avoid my pictures for ages after they are released. Then when I do eventually catch up with them, and they are half forgotten (by me, at any rate), I can view my work with more detachment and a critical eye.

"Of course there are always things you see in your own films that you feel could have been done better. But once a film is finished it's too late to do anything about it. The ship has sailed and one's mistakes are embalmed. But you can learn something for the next time.

On stage acting: "I think every actor actually prefers the stage because there is a continuity and sustained effort in the work you cannot have in a film studio. The theater is the actor's medium. The cinema, the director's and the writer's. One of the happiest periods I ever had was when I was in the long stage run of *Arsenic and Old Lace*—yes, my name was written in the script but Raymond Massey played my role in the film because he was under contract to Warner Bros. at the time."

Pet Hate: "Background music in films. I know my films have it too—the heavy sinister stuff. But I still think background music is an insult to the intelligence of audiences. The mood should be conveyed by the action and not have to be underlined. There was that Hitchcock film LIFEBOAT in which three or four people were floating on a boat in the middle of the ocean. But from nowhere at all there came a celestial choir on the soundtrack. It's so silly."

I reminded him that his original FRANKENSTEIN had no background music and that it seemed to have emerged in pictures a couple of years later.

"I haven't seen FRANKENSTEIN for years," he replied. "I expect the Musicians' Union eventually decided they wanted more work to do and so we had background music. No, I've never discussed it with any producer; it's none of my business."

UNIVERSAL AND AIP

Boris said that whenever he goes to Universal City he still sees many of the old technical crew who worked with him in the classic days. "It was always a happy lot," he said.

Then he went on to pay tribute to American International to whom he is currently under contract. "James Nicholson and Samuel Arkoff, the bosses, and everyone connected with AIP show me wonderful kindness and consideration," said Boris. "And their standards of production, writing, directing, and color are very fine," he declared.

Boris said he found THE HOUSE AT THE END OF THE WORLD one of the most interesting subjects he had ever had. "I do turn into a kind of monster in the end," he said. "The make-up will be uncomfortable—but not painful!"

He did not know when or what his next film would be. He was waiting for the Powers That Be at AIP to decide on that.

PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS

"It's good to be living at home in England," he said. "I've lived abroad for most of my life but when you get older you feel the roots of home very deeply. I have a great regard for the American people—in fact nearly all the friends of my wife and I are in America and we miss them very much. But we usually manage a couple of trips a year to the States so we are still in touch."

Hobbies: "Still watching cricket, naturally—and rugby. I've been waiting in the studio since 10:30 this morning and I haven't done a stroke on the set but I must be on the alert when they call. I would have loved to have gone to the rugby cup final that's playing this afternoon but work comes first. I used to do a lot of gardening but my back was stronger then."

Animals? "I'm very fond of dogs and used to keep them when I was in Hollywood. But we have an apartment in London and I don't think one should have a dog without a garden for it to run in."

Movies: "Do I go to other people's movies? Well, that's different. Yes, I do go occasionally. Usually to see the people in them—and there are some very bright young talents about these days. I wish them luck. I wish, though, that the stories kept pace with the acting nowadays."

THE TEST

Unable to resist it, I asked Boris whether, if I gave him

the title of any one of his films long ago, he could tell me what it was about?

He laughed. "In some cases, maybe. In a lot of cases I don't expect so. Some of them come back to me more than others."

When I said how young he still looked for his years he chuckled and pointed to my BLACK CAT publicity sheet. "You wouldn't recognize me or Bela there," he said. Then, as an afterthought, "Poor Poe. The things we did to him when he wasn't there to defend himself. Some of those old films weren't in the least like him."

Boris said his wife, Evelyn, sometimes visited the set. "We're moving into another apartment this weekend," he told me. "It's a nice one, still in London, without so many stairs for my legs to climb. So she's busy at home doing the packing. It's just as well I'm doing a picture this week—I'm hopeless at helping in the house!"

And that is the story of the man in THE HOUSE AT THE END OF THE WORLD.

(Editor's Note: The above mentioned title eventually became DIE, MONSTER DIE!)

PLAYTIME

These were some of Boris Karloff's legitimate theater appearances.

First professional part was in Ferenc Molnar's *The Devil.*

In the early days of his career he appeared in 106 different plays in 53 consecutive weeks.

Other than the foregoing, some of the many many plays he acted in were:

Baby Mine
Bought and Paid For
Charlie's Aunt
East Lynne
Kongo (1928)
Window Panes (1928)
Paid in Full
The Virginian (as Trampas)
What Happened to Jones
Why Smith Left Home
The Criminal Code (as Galloway) 1929
Window Panes
Arsenic and Old Lace (as Jonathan Brewster) 1941
Linden Tree (as Prof. Linden) 1948

The Shop at Shy Corner (Descius Heiss) 1949
Peter Pan (Mr. Darling/Captain Hook) 1950
The Lark (Caughon) 1956
On Borrowed Time (1960)

DEMONS OF THE FILM COLONY

Ted LeBerthon

(from *Weird Tales*, Oct. 1932)

Was a gigantic hoax perpetrated on the author by "Dracula" Lugosi and "Frankenstein" Karloff, aided and abetted by the photographer?

For ten years I have been writing stories about the activities of the motion picture colony for what are known as the "fan" magazines; and, in strict justice to the movie people in and about Hollywood, I never before had an experience such as the one that befell me recently—for there is nothing weird, preternatural or otherwise affrighting about most motion picture people, from the child Jackie Cooper to the more elderly Marie Dressler. There have been, it is true, curious legends about Greta Garbo, but she stays away from interviewers. Whatever her secret, she keeps it.

Obviously, I could not relate the experience I had in the pages of a "fan" magazine. The readers of these magazines are too accustomed to sunshine to relish shadows. So I decided to submit to the readers of WEIRD TALES the ghastly details of the gigantic hoax perpetrated on me by Bela Lugosi, star of the films *Dracula* and *Murders in the Rue Morgue*, and Boris Karloff, who played the monster in the film *Frankenstein*.

Candidly, for reasons which the reader may surmise before he finishes reading, I have hesitated considerably about writing of just what happened, but now I feel I should make what happened public.

I was just leaving Universal City one rainy, dreary morning when John Le Roy Johnstone, Universal publicity director, called to me:

"Ted, don't go away. I just happened to think that our two demons, 'Dracula' Lugosi and 'Frankenstein' Karloff, are coming here in a few minutes. A demons' rendezvous ought to interest you. I might add that they're hastening here from

opposite directions, to meet for the first time. They actually have never met. You see, *Dracula* and *Murders in the Rue Morgue*, in which Lugosi starred, were made here at different times than *Frankenstein*, in which Karloff played the ghastly, man-made monster. And that's why they've never met professionally. Nor have they ever met socially, although both have been in Hollywood, on and off, for several years. But you know the film colony. All split up into little groups and circles."

I didn't mind sticking around. For one thing, a murky drizzle had begun to fall outside. The mammoth Universal stages, seen through a window, seemed, in the grayness, to be enormous squat tombs, unadorned sarcophagi in which giants five hundred feet tall, stretched in death, could be laid. It might not be a bad idea, I concluded, to wait around a little, if only to give the rain a chance to stop.

"Doggoned if it isn't just the kind of a morning for a couple of monsters to meet," laughed Johnstone. "And do you know something, I've a queer hunch something funny'll happen when they meet. Not that there's any professional rivalry between them in the demon field, as far as I know; but there's been a lot of banter going around the studio about the weird possibilities, you know, the things that could happen, when Dracula meets the Frankenstein monster! Candidly, I wouldn't be surprised if they try to frame each other."

"What do you mean?" I chuckled nervously.

"Well," he countered, "it's natural that this meeting should strike them both as funny. And you know what actors are for pulling gags on each other."

The rain, increasing, muttered against the ground outside.

Boris Karloff was first to arrive—and, fantastically enough, in evening clothes, worn under a rain-flecked overcoat which he tossed off with a mischievous, almost boyish fling.

We were introduced. And I learned, from his accent, then from his admission, that his name is not Karloff, but that he is an Englishman with a most unfortunate name. But we won't go into that.

He is slender, debonair, graceful, with powerful shoulders and large strong hands, smooth iron-gray hair, darkly tanned skin, and lucent, deep-set brown eyes. A witty, casual, well-bred fellow, with one of those strong-boned, hollow-cheeked countenances that seems carved out of hickory, and is characteristic of so many well-travelled, weather-beaten, distinguished-appearing Britishers.

He joked waggishly, this Englishman from God knows

where, whose name is *not* Karloff, about his coming meeting with Bela Lugosi.

As he was talking, and Johnstone and I were absorbed in his high spirits, the door leading to the studio outside evidently opened. No one saw it open. In fact, we did not see anything until Karloff, who faced the door as he chatted with us, suddenly looked up and asseverated startlingly, "Oh, my God!"

Johnstone and I looked around and I don't know what he thought or felt. I do know I became visibly disconcerted, to put it lightly.

There stood Lugosi, filling the doorway, quiet as death, and smiling in his curiously knowing way. It is the smile of a tall, weary, haunted aristocrat, a person of perhaps fallen greatness, a secretive Lucifer who sees too clearly and knows too much, and perhaps wishes it were not so, and would like to be a gracious chap. He, too, was in evening clothes—on a rainy morning! He advanced with a soft, springy tread.

Karloff stood up as if galvanized by some sudden irrevocable plan of action. Then he turned on the advancing Lugosi a cold, unbelieving stare that would have riveted another man in his tracks. But the tall, tapering-fingered Hungarian, drawing himself erect, continued to smile with unmistakably ghastly knowingness.

It was Lugosi's hand which was thrust forward first.

As they shook hands they seemed to lock horns with their eyes. Only for a moment, however; for both broke into ear-to-ear grins.

"I hope I didn't scare you to death," Lugosi smiled, narrowing his eyes, and seeming to look right through the quondam monster.

"I hope I didn't scare *you*," parried Karloff mirthfully.

I could not be certain, but I thought Lugosi bristled, as if his demoniacal prowess had been challenged by a tyro in demonism.

Finally he said slowly:

"I think I could scare you to death."

Karloff struck a match, lit a cigarette, puffed a couple of times, and retorted with an air of whimsical scorn:

"I not only think I can scare your ears right off, Mr. Dracula, I'll bet you that I can."

Within the next few minutes a wager of a hundred dollars had been made. They would go onto a deserted set, within one of the vast, empty, tomb-like stages squatting in the rain outside. No lights would be turned on. They

would tell each other stories—such stories of darkness, terror and madness that one or the other would either faint or cry out for the other to stop. The other would then be pronounced victor.

Publicist Johnstone, grinning a bit unconvincingly, as if he were somehow ill, protested:

"There should be a referee. You go along, Le Berthon, and decide which one out-scares the other. And, I'll tell you what. Take Ray Jones, the photographer, along. He can get incontrovertible evidence."

"I don't want to oppose your wishes," put in Lugosi, his eyes widening like wrathful alarm signals, "but I would rather be alone with Mr. Karloff. You won't need any evidence. All you may need is a doctor, a nerve and heart specialist. You see, only one of us will walk off that stage. The other will be . . . er . . . carried off."

He said this with some heat, yet with a growing twinkle in eyes which gradually narrowed again. But Johnstone was obdurate.

And so, two tall actors in evening clothes, a photographer and a writer walked with bowed heads and hunched shoulders in the rain to reach the stage building with its unfortunate resemblance, for me, to a colossal sepulcher.

We entered a small door in the side, nearly tripping over cables that coiled like lifeless serpents about the floor in the dank, dusky atmosphere. Photographer Jones lit a match. We found our way to a set where, among other articles of furniture, there was a davenport. It was then agreed that Jones could take photographs if he and I would stand twenty-five feet away in a dark corner, and if he would use only noiseless flash powder.

The tall actors in evening clothes sat on the davenport. In the obscure gloom we scarcely could discern their figures. But soon we were to hear a mournful voice, Lugosi's.

"Boris," he began, in a gloating sonority, "what would you say if this set, this stage, this studio, suddenly vanished, and you found that in reality you and I were sitting at the bottom of a pit? Ha! That would be inconvenient for you wouldn't it? But of course I might provide some charming company—I might drag down into this pit an exquisite young woman. And I should indulge in a curious experiment that would cause your hair to turn white—and your stomach to turn inside out.

"Boris," he went on in a ghoulish, sickeningly exultant tone, "women are thrilled by Dracula, the suave one. Women love the horrible, the creepy, more than men. Why does

woman always tell the story of her husband's death so often and with such relish? Why does she go to cemeteries? Tenderness? Grief? Bah! It's because she likes to be hurt, tortured, terrified! Yes, Boris! Ah, Boris, to win a woman, take her with you to see *Dracula*, the movie. As she sees me, the bat-like vampire, swoop through an open casement into some girl's boudoir, there to sink teeth into neck and drink blood, she will thrill through every nerve and fiber. That is your cue to draw close to her, Boris. When she is limp as a rag, take her where you will, do with her what you will. Ah, especially, Boris, bite her on the neck!

"The love-bite, it is the beginning. In the end, you too, Boris, will become a vampire. You will live five hundred years. You will sleep in moldy graves at night, and make fiendish love to beauties by day. You will see generations live and die. You will see a girl baby born to some woman, and wait a mere sixteen to eighteen years for her to grow up, so that you can sink fangs into a soft white neck and drink a scarlet stream. You will be irresistible, for you will have in your powerful body the very heat of hell, the virility of Satan. And some day, of course, you will be discovered —a knife, after long centuries, will be plunged into you, you will drop like a plummet into the bottomless sulfurous pit. Yes, Boris, that's the end—for you! For us! For, look at me, Boris . . ."

"Ha! Ha! Ha! You fool, Bela," came Karloff's scornful, pealing laugh in the darkness, "why try that kindergarten stuff on me? You ask me to look at you, Bela. Well, look at me! Look . . . look . . . look . . . and take an occasional glance upward, Bela. These two hands of mine, clenched together above my head, could descend at any moment, in a second, ay, even before I finish this sentence, if I wanted them to, and they'd bash your distinguished head in as if it were an egg. Your brains would run out like the yolk of an egg, and spatter your pretty tuxedo.

"Bela, a monster created by Frankenstein is not worried by your stories of sucking blood from beauties' necks. But did *you* see the movie *Frankenstein*, Bela? Did you see *me* take an innocent little girl, a child playing among flowers, and drown her? Some sentimentalists said I did it unknowingly. Bosh! I have done it a thousand times, and will do it a thousand times again. Bela, it's dark in here, but you know me. You know it was no accident or chance, but significant, that I—the Englishman from God knows where whose name is *not* Karloff—was called upon to play that monstrous role! You know me, Bela, you know me. Why that bosh about

five hundred years old? You know that both of us are nearly six thousand years old! And that we've met many times before, the last time not more than two hundred years ago. . . . And you shouldn't have made that foolish wager. Admit it, Bela!" Karloff's voice shook with deep agitation.

"I wonder," came Lugosi's reply, dreary as a fog-horn in the semi-darkness.

In the meantime, Photographer Jones in his scarce-visible corner kept snapping pictures. The noiseless powder recurrently rose in puffs, so that—spookily enough—the scene resembled the laboratory of a medieval alchemist.

"Come, Bela—let's go. Er . . . Jones, Le Berthon," Karloff shouted hoarsely, "are you ready to go? Bela and I have found we're members of the same—well, suppose we say lodge. We're therefore, quite unable to scare each other to death, for reasons you might not understand, even to oblige you. You'll just have to call it a draw."

"All right, we're ready to go," responded Jones, nervously enough for that matter. "And—say—I've used up my last match. Will one of you fellows strike one?"

I shall never know whether it was Lugosi or Karloff who struck the match. All I do know is that when the match was struck it apparently revealed, not Lugosi and Karloff on that davenport, but two slimy, scaly monsters, dragon-like serpents, with blood-red, venomous eyes. The apparitional things flashed before me so suddenly that I became sick to my stomach and made a rush, on buckling legs, for the exit—and the cool air.

Just as I reached it and noted fleetingly that the rain had stopped, and that my heart was pounding to the bursting-point, and that I was strangely weak and giddy, Jones and the two tall actors in evening clothes came through the door. Jones was rather sober and unconcerned, but Lugosi and Karloff were laughing heartily over something or other.

"Will you have lunch with us?" Lugosi asked me, still grinning but with something of a physician's tender concern.

"No, thank you," I replied, scarcely looking either at him or Karloff, "I have to hurry away."

And I did hurry away.

I am, of course, now convinced that what happened was their idea of a practical joke, that the slimy, scaly things I had seen, the things which had so frightened and sickened me in that fleeting moment, were either the imaginings of

my over-wrought nerves—or some mechanically contrived illusions in which Jones had some share.

There are, of course, some who will wonder if I do not merely prefer this simple, comforting explanation to one that might cause Hollywood hostesses to fear to invite Lugosi and Karloff to social functions—and fear not to invite them!

Many people, deep down, still are superstitious. And there are many things in life we do not fully understand, such as why it is the destiny of certain human beings to portray certain roles—whether in real or "reel" life.

"DL 4833"

Forrest J Ackerman

DL 4833 is not a telephone number.
It doesn't stand for Dear Lugosi or Dreadful Lore.

It's simply the code number, in case you want to order DECCA LONGPLAY album #4833.

It's the album I had the honor to ghostwrite for Boris Karloff. That is to say, I prepared the script which he narrated.

I also wrote the liner of the jacket. To fit the allotted space, some of the copy had to be edited. Karloffans, I know, want to read *every* word about him, so, if you *have* the album, you can compare what I wrote with what was published; and if you don't have it, Verne Langdon, Milt Larsen and myself, its producers, hope you will ask your local record shop to order it for you. We tried to make it Basic Boris, the best of Karloff, and from fan letters received, it seems the attempt was successful. One writer, an Albert Van Hageland of Brussels, Belgium, wrote: "You will never guess what my wife and son and I did on Christmas eve: we played the record of *Boris Karloff And His Friends*. It was wonderful." And Miss Svetlana Makarovič of distant Ljubljana, the capital of Jugoslavia: "I cannot tell you what emotion surged through me the first time I heard the record. As a lover of all things weird and fantastic, it is a treasure to me."

The original text of the liner notes:

BORIS KARLOFF was "born" 35 years ago, when, in 1931, Colin Clive as Henry Frankenstein exulted on the motion picture screen "It's moving . . . it's alive . . . it's moving . . . it's alive . . . it's alive! *It's alive!!!*" and that

triumph of make-up and pantomime, the Frankenstein Monster, built from bodies taken from the graves, the gallows, the mortuary, rose like a latterday Lazarus, a soulless automaton, a Luciferian juggernaut, to stalk the screaming world and invade the nightmares of all mankind. You will hear that historic moment of creation in this album as Colin Clive and Dwight Frye live again.

1931, and Lon Chaney Sr., the silent Master of Horror, the "Man of A Thousand Faces," was one year dead; ascended to the throne of terror was King Boris the Benign, Monster of A Thousand Faces—Frankenstein, Black Cat, Mummy Im-ho-tep, Raven, Fu Manchu, Walking Dead, Haunted Strangler . . . list lengthy and legendary.

In the history of horrific films there have been four eminently distinctive, readily recognizable voices: the chilling nasal whine of the cherubic Black Angel, the man once called the Lord High Minister of All That is Sinister; the oddly accented, weirdly accentuated tones of the Thirsty Count from Transylvania; the compelling smoky vocal cords vibrating deep in the leathery throat of an actor who dominated the screen though unseen in his first unforgettable performance;—*and*, the suavely menacing, deliciously frightening, diabolically delightful delivery of your host, Boris Karloff. The tall proud vampire and the gnome-small ghoul will speak no more, except in echoes from the past; but in his 78th year—to the field of fantastic films what his equally fabulous contemporary, Maurice Chevalier, is to international chanson—Boris Karloff brings a unique quality to this recording unmatched in the annals of man or monster. His chilling charm exerts a cobralike fascination, his mesmeric voice laving over the hypnotized listener like that of the ferryman on the stygian river Styx.

This album might be called a chronology of necrology, a documentary of death; but it is movingly imaginative rather than mundanely morbid. Boris Karloff has approached this project with perspective and respect as he speaks mainly of those who have passed on into the unknown—Dwight Frye once Dracula's acolyte of the night, cringing in awe and terror before the supernal wrath of his supernatural, undead Master; and we hear again the familiar voice of that Master of the macabre, speaking immortal lines from beyond the grave. Boris Karloff re-introduces us to Ernest Thesiger as zealous Doctor Pretorius, the skeleton who walked like a man and added a new dimension of diablerie to the experiments of Henry Frankenstein . . . Lionel Atwill lives again as we hear his cold tones, clipped and harsh, as

attempts to cope with the SON OF FRANKENSTEIN . . . Venerable Edward Van Sloan is at home once more among ancient mummy cases and barely cold cadavers as he delivers his arresting lines. You'll hear the *"skreeek!"* heard 'round the world when THE BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN first beheld her monstrous mate . . . and the late lamented Maria Ouspenskaya raising the hackles on the neck as she speaks of the dread curse of lycanthropy and mourns the passing of the man afflicted with werewolfery.

Setting the mood throughout with minory threnodies is the enchanted organist of radio, recordings and television, an artist who might have taken lessons from Erik himself, the Phantom of the Opera. In the spirit of this album he is the ideal performer for the part: Korla Pandit. [This, alas, did not come to pass.]

BORIS KARLOFF AND HIS FRIENDS is a sincere and moving tribute to the men and women of the netherworld of cinematic science and fantasy terror tales who have made indelible impressions as master menaces and famous monsters. It is an exciting concept, triumphantly realized, and may well win Boris Karloff a *second* Ann Radcliffe Award for significant contribution to the Gothic field. It is a nostalgic listening "must," one you will wish to re-experience frequently: whenever the moon is full, the lamp is low, the winter winds blow, the midnight hour strikes, Halloween is nigh, you've just read Stoker or Lovecraft, Bradbury or Bloch or Edgar Allan Poe, or you just feel in the mood to join . . .

BORIS KARLOFF AND HIS FRIENDS.

* * *

Here is a review of the record by George Forsythe from the Boston *Sunday Herald* for 5 February 1967.

"Decca Records has won my personal thanks for *An Evening With Boris Karloff*, a collection of original soundtracks from some of Universal Pictures' most famous monster movies.

"Boris narrates the film and supplies a bit of background to efforts of Frankenstein, Dracula, the Wolf Man, the Mummy and other such lovelies. Hearing the Frankenstein bit reminded me of having first seen the movie. My older brother took me with him to see it—against orders—and, after bruising me with clutches of his fears (I had plenty of my own), defied me to tell 'our secret.' I was more

afraid of him than I was of Frankenstein so I remained silent but my mother wondered why I wanted to sleep in a chair with the lights on and a baseball bat at my side.

"This brought it all back when Colin Clive, as Dr. Frankenstein, has that memorable scene when his monster comes to life. The eerie music sounds in the background and you can almost see the charges flashing back and forth over his weird machine. He and his assistant Dwight Frye watch and then the doctor shouts his triumph. The cockles raised once again on the back of the neck.

"And there is the exquisitely diabolical voice of Bela Lugosi as Count Dracula, setting up an unsuspecting pigeon for his own peculiar kind of blood bank.

"There is Elsa Lanchester's immortal shriek when she first gets a look at her spouse in THE BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN.

"There is the clipped voice of Lionel Atwill, who always was either an evil doctor or the one-armed police inspector dedicated to getting that monster Frankenstein.

"The album brought back the memories of Saturday afternoon shows where you watched the picture through your hand and the countless sleepless nights.

"This is one album no one need ask to borrow. I'm selfish."

KARLOFF HAUNTS THE COMICS

Donald F. Glut

The gaunt, sunken-cheeked visage of the Boris Karloff of the 1920s and 30s proved adaptable to a medium that relied on definite caricatures of good and evil, the comic strip, or, more correctly, the comic book.

It was Karloff's sinister appearance that cast him at least twice as Frankenstein's Monster in animated cartoons—as the fiendish drag race saboteur in an early talkie Bosco short, and sharing a table with Count Dracula in Walt Disney's 1933 Mickey Mouse film, *Mickey's Gala Premiere*.

That Karloff's classical features would be often captured on the comic book page was inevitable—and totally welcomed by his fans.

Boris Karloff's initial comic book appearance has been traced as far back as 1939, in the very first issue of Picture Comics' (now National Periodical Publications) *Movie Comics*, dated April. As this title presented adaptations from current motion pictures in comic strip form, running stills,

augmented by retouching, captions and dialog balloons, the need for variety dictated a sampling of many types of films. Thus, *Movie Comics* #1 had material to satisfy the tastes of all film buffs—*Gunga Din, The Great Man Votes, Fisherman's Wharf,* the serial *Scouts to the Rescue* and the big budget Universal Pictures horror sensation of 1939, *Son of Frankenstein.*

In essence, the adaptation of *Son of Frankenstein,* partially colored, partially hand-drawn, was an accurate retelling of the film. Some deviations from the screenplay appeared and were expected, since the film ran over 90 minutes and the strip only filled eight pages. The arrangement of stills used in the strip was often chronologically out of place, yet matched the captions and dialog to the extent that anyone not in the "know" was unaware of the juxtaposition.

And as Basil Rathbone as Wolf von Frankenstein, the Son, swings down upon the hated Monster on a chain, kicking him to a molten death in the pit of boiling sulphur, the strip closes:

"With the Monster forever removed from the Earth, the curse is gone from the name of von Frankenstein. Happy and mentally at rest, Wolf closes the eerie castle and takes his family away forever. —The End."

Besides the story of *Son of Frankenstein, Movie Comics* #1 also featured Karloff on two separate pages. The first of these, entitled "Movie Make-Up", featured one photograph of Boris as "the man . . . in real life a very normal and mild-mannered Englishman," and six shots of the actor being transformed into the flat-topped Monster through the magic hands of Jack Pierce with accompanying text.

And on another page of "Screen Scoops," this true collector's item, the caption described a picture of the Monster:

"The costume used by Boris Karloff in 'Son of Frankenstein' weighed 64 pounds—of which 12 pounds were in the make-up, 25 in the shoes and the balance in the clothes and padding . . ."

When cartoonist Charles Addams created his infamous family of weirdoes, his model for the tall, zombie-like butler was admittedly Boris Karloff. So delighted with this immortalization was the actor that he, a fan of Addams himself, consented to write the introduction of *Drawn and Quartered,* the 1942 hard-cover Simon and Schuster collection of the grim cartoons. Unfortunately, the introduction was retained only for the first edition.

Most interesting is the fact that for a while Addams'

concept of the husband of that strange family grew a heavy beard, making the character extremely similar in appearance to Karloff's butler role in the original *Old Dark House.*

When the characters moved to television in 1964 as *The Addams Family,* and named the butler Lurch, he was portrayed by Ted Cassidy, conveying the look of a comical Karloff.

In 1940, writer/artist Dick Briefer created a *Frankenstein* comic strip that was to become so popular that it would survive in one form or another for two and one half decades. Set in contemporary New York City, the series began in *Prize Comics* #7, December issue, published by Feature Publications, and recounted Victor Frankenstein's creation of a Monster that escapes, runs wild in the metropolis, and is eventually shot off the crown of the Statue of Liberty. The Monster is not dead, however, surviving to return to his maker with a terrible threat:

"You want to know why I *spared* you? It's my *revenge!* I didn't ask to be given *life*—a ghastly life of *horror* and *misery*—

"I *spared* you to *live*—to *watch* and *see* the *suffering* and *grief* that *I, your creation,* will cause the *human race.* You will *chase* me, but *never get me!* I go *now,* always haunting and *tormenting* you!"

Thus began the series that was to run for many years in the pages of *Prize Comics.*

Briefer's first concept of the Frankenstein Monster was a hideous assemblage of unmatching flesh, approximately fifteen feet tall, clad in ragged clothing. The face was white and corpse-like, the nose a mere twisted stub set between the bulging orbs, the hair long and stringy, the moldy teeth showing beneath the torn mouth, the skin maintained with bold crimson stitches. And yet, through all that distortion, through the almost nauseating visage of Briefer's original Frankenstein creature, the hating countenance was definitely a projection from the basic features of Karloff. There was enough of Karloff there to recognize, enough horror to please the readers, and not enough similarity to the copyrighted Universal make-up to warrant a lawsuit.

As the story line progressed in *Prize Comics,* the ghastly appearance of the Monster was gradually toned down and the creature became more pleasant to look at. The splash panel of *Prize Comics* #12, July 1941, made virtually no attempt to disguise the features of Boris Karloff beneath the face of the sketched grotesquerie. That one large panel *was* Karloff, and there was no doubting the fact.

The *Frankenstein* strip eventually evolved through the years—or *de*volved, depending upon the individual's tastes—into a humorous item not too unlike *The Munsters* television program of later years. The Monster had become, with no definite break from the horrible beast that wrecked much of New York City, a happy, smiling oaf with a face as ridiculous as it once was hideous. The basics still existed in "the Merry Monster"—the peg of a nose set even higher than before, the flattened head, the black bangs. But gone was the horror, except for that which could be transformed into humor.

This new image proved popular enough to warrant a comic book of its own, simply titled *Frankenstein*, the first issue appearing in 1945.

The eleventh issue, dated January-February 1948, brought the English actor to full comic book glory in the lead story titled "Frankenstein Meets Boris Karload, Master of Horror". After a performance of "Love that Graveyard", Karload is visited backstage by his gigantic fan, Frankenstein. Believing the creature to be part of a publicity stunt, Karload goes with him, where he meets everything from real vampires and mummies to a one-eyed, square-headed "Camera Man". Beyond endurance, Karload flees from Frankenstein and his friends and retires from the acting profession, opening up a haberdashery.

The *Frankenstein* comic book folded in 1949 but was revived under the same title in March 1952 with issue #18.

The most serious version of the strip, this *Frankenstein*, running until issue #33 in 1954 when the Comics Code Authority banned the sale of horror comics, placed the Monster correctly in a European setting. Later, the adventures took place in America, then back to Europe again. The Monster still kept the features by then a trademark of Briefer, although the face had been considerably revamped. Almost as ugly as the Monster of *Prize Comics* #7, though more realistic, the creature still managed to convey impressions of Karloff despite the bizarre additions.

Karloff's image appeared, sans any monstrous trappings, in "Nightmare Statue", a filler story not featuring the Monster and not illustrated by Briefer, in issue #23, February-March 1953. In this one, art dealer Walter Ross, wanting to murder a young artist engaged to the girl he loves, and looking more than suspiciously like Boris, adores the statue of Pygmalion's Galatea so much that the cold stone-carved woman literally comes to life. At least, that is what he thinks,

until the hard fingers lock about his throat and the statue speaks:

"No, Walter Rosser! I've come to life *to destroy you!* You who would destroy the love that created me!"

Rosser only replies with, "*Gawk!*"

Pre-1955 horror comics published by Marvel Comics and other companies frequently utilized the Frankenstein and Karloff themes. While Marvel published many stories involving the Frankenstein Monster, most of these did not adapt the creature's face from Karloff's own. One particular story, "The Monsters", leading off *Marvel Tales* #106, April, 1952, included both Karloff and the Karloff-adapted creation of Frankenstein.

"Boris" in this case is an actor in horror films, frequently donning the make-up of the Frankenstein Monster for the screen. His director, tired of the same plots repeated time and again, decides to give his next production something extra. And so, the director, Boris and movie crew embark to Germany, to film an adventure in terror in the actual von Frankenstein castle.

The place is a shambles but the laboratory apparatus appears to be repairable.

"Make these electrical devices operate just as they might have operated for von Frankenstein," the director tells his crew. "Powered by the lightning flashing outside!"

"Don't you think it might be dangerous to try to imitate Frankenstein's experiment?" the electrician inquires.

But the director has his way; and as Boris departs into the shadows from which he will emerge for scene number one, the laboratory sparks and crackles and hums and . . . *screams!*

The scream of Boris is *too* realistic.

Footsteps thump through the echoing stone corridors; and from the shadows steps the actual Frankenstein Monster, revived by the director's craving for authenticity . . . dragging the mangled body of Boris.

The Monster advances. And the director, inching toward the roof of the castle, filming every movement until the giant hands seize his neck, plunges with the Monster of Frankenstein into a quicksand bog.

Horror comic books reached their narrative and artistic zenith in the now classic Entertaining Comics, or EC line, with totally literate writing embellished by some of the finest illustrations ever to appear in the 10¢ format. A number of Frankenstein and Frankenstein-type stories were

printed in the EC horror titles, though none of these used the familiar face of Boris Karloff.

However, Karloff did appear in composite with Bela Lugosi as Bela Kardiff, the story titled "In Character", published in EC's *Shock Suspense Stories* #17, November 1954. Kardiff, a horror actor bearing the facial features of *both* Karloff and Lugosi, is given the customary testimonial dinner and gold watch by Magnus Pictures, honoring his career as the world's most titanic screen terror. Pouring the drinks himself, the actor then relates his career upon the screen and stage, beginning with the part of the mute Monster of the film, *Frankenstein*, progressing through *Dracula, Mummy's Hand, The Hideous Ghoul* and *Frankenstein Meets a Werewolf* and finishing with the sad note of ridicule, unemployment, and occasional degrading performances in trashy films and stageplays. Although the first half of Kardiff's tale corresponds very closely to Karloff's own life, the latter portion is undoubtedly patterned after Lugosi, whose career gradually disintegrated with the advent of the 1940s.

Kardiff proposes a toast to these men who had helped to "make him a success." Then, watching to make sure that all the drinks have been downed, the thin, grinning actor sneers:

"You *know*, gentlemen . . . Wherever I *went* after my star faded here in Hollywood, I could *never escape* those *things* you did for me. I could never *live down* the stereotype you'd cast of me . . . The *horror character* . . .The *murderer*. So I finally *accepted* it!"

The tall figure of Bela Kardiff leans over the table, watching his "friends" gasping, choking, clutching their throats, hearts . . .

"I *am* what you *made* me, gentlemen!" he concludes. "I put *strychnine* in your champagne!"

We might be thankful that Karloff's career did not follow that of Bela Kardiff to the end.

Boris Karloff appeared quite often as the Frankenstein Monster in the many satire and lampoon comic books of the early and mid-1950s. In the original, EC's *Mad*, before the title became enlarged to the present day *Mad Magazine*, Karloff and the Monster were combined to form "The Gasp", a take-off on *Little Orphan Annie's* hired killer, The Asp. The lampoon, titled "Little Orphan Melvin!" appearing in *Mad* #9, March 1954, showed The Gasp emerge from a coffin to strike down the enemies of "Daddy Peacebucks" with everything from bazookas, machineguns and axes to

slingshots and bean blowers, repeating only the word "Kill!"

After *Mad* went magazine size, Karloff continued to appear as himself and as the Monster with more frequency than he had in the comic book. 1958 was a popular year for such humor magazines and *Mad Magazine* found itself vastly imitated. One of these imitations, *Thimk*, capitalized on the Karloff features by creating a running character, Otis Drakenstein, their own Frankenstein-like version of *Mad's* Alfred E. Neuman. Otis appeared on many *Thimk* covers and was featured inside in an occasional comic strip.

Among the *Mad* comic book imitations was St. John's publication, *Whack*. The second issue, dated December 1953, led off with the horror comics satire, "Weird Creepy Awful Spooky Ghastly Comics", featuring the "three bat--head sisters, Alicia, Delisha and Militia." The story presented a definitely Karloffian Frankenstein Monster, appropriately called Boris, the nephew of the three wretched hags. At the end of the story, Boris returns home with a sultry, black-haired, Charles Addamsish woman in a green floorlength gown.

"Duhhh . . . Hullo, aunties! Uhhh . . . This is *Vixen*, thuh girl I'm gonna *marry!*" he grunts.

Immediately, the trio of aunts do not get along with Vixen.

"You're not *good* enuff for him!" one of them shouts. "*He's* a genuine blue-blooded *vampire!* . . . You . . . you *mortal*, you!"

Vixen opens her mouth, showing her sharp teeth. "*A vampire?!!*" she exclaims. "Oh, how *utterly!! I'm a ghoul!!*"

Harvey Kurtzman, who edited the original comic book version of *Mad*, returned to publishing in the late 1950s with a satiric magazine called *Humbug*. Slightly smaller than the standard comic book size, *Humbug*'s seventh issue, February 1958, featured as its lead story "Frankenstien and his Monster". Adapted unbelievably closely from the original 1931 motion picture, the satire not only uncannily recreated the visage of Boris Karloff as Frankenstein's Monster but also the faces of Colin Clive, Mae Clarke, Edward Van Sloan and John Boles. The Monster ended, as in the movie, amid the engulfing flames of the burning windmill. An afterthought brought "Sheriff Matt Dillon" to the local saloon with the devastating statement:

"That monster was entitled to a fair trial. A man in Dodge just confessed to the killings. The monster was innocent. You fools have lynched the wrong man."

On a more serious note, a green giant definitely bearing

Karloff's features appeared in "The Frontier Frankenstein", in National's *Tomahawk* #103, March-April 1966. After battling the towering fur-jacketed creature with all available weapons, frontier fighter Tomahawk and his "Rip-Roaring Rangers," discover the Frankenstein monstrosity to be actually Big Anvil, one of their own band, transformed by herbs discovered in Africa by a German scientist.

Karloff's face was the basis for an enormous living mummy, Tukamenon, a villain introduced in National's *Challengers of the Unknown* #63, August-September 1968, in a story entitled "None Shall Escape the Walking Evil". The mummy was commanded by the powerful Kaftu, Son of the Sphinx, a member of the Challengers' team of ultra-villains, The Legion of the Weird. Tukamenon, bursting free from the mummy hall of the Metropolitan Museum of Egyptology, was a lumbering monster of the classical mold, spouting such dialog as:

"I am coming, Master! Though I hate your evil bidding more than the serpent's tooth or lion's claw . . . still I must obey that cursed command till *Ra,* the merciful sun god, releases me from this bondage and sets me . . . *free!*"

Tukamenon, Karloff countenance and all, did not find everlasting peace in the sixty-third issue of *Challengers of the Unknown* but he managed to lumber through subsequent issues of that title.

In the humorous vein, *The Adventures of Jerry Lewis,* a comic book published by the same company, entered a Karloff mummy in the eighty-seventh issue, for March-April 1965. In the story "The Kid Who Made Monsters", Lewis' holy terror nephew Renfrew zaps his life-size kit models of the Mummy and assorted fiends with an alien raygun, which animates the figures with life.

And Boris Karloff played a humorous role in a recent issue of *Angel and the Ape.*

National's most successful character, Superman, met Karloff while the actor's *Thriller* television series was in its height of popularity, in *Jimmy Olsen, Hollywood Star,* October 1962. In this one, an unknown, hooded figure is instrumental in solving a mystery. At the end of the story, this strange and mysterious character is unmasked as the lisping Englishman.

Karloff's face has not been absent from the pages of recent titles published by the Marvel Comics Group. The Spider-Man tale "The Reprehensible Riddle of . . . The Sorcerer!", published in the 14th issue of *Marvel Super-Heroes,* May 1968, featured the Karloffian Sorcerer, creator

and controller of the Frankensteinish Synthetic Man. The futile purpose of the blue-skinned behemoth—to destroy Spider-Man.

In *The Amazing Spider-Man* #73, June 1969, in the book-length epic "The Web Closes!", one of the legendary old-time leaders of the "Maggia", a vast criminal organization, is introduced. Named Silvermane, the reader upon viewing this arch enemy of law and order immediately recalls the model for the character—Boris Karloff.

Another book-length story, "Dark Moon Rise, Hell Hound Kill", was printed in Marvel's *Nick Fury, Agent of S.H.I.E.L.D.*, third issue, August 1968. The eye-patched secret agent was lifted from his usual brand of super-spy science fictional goings-on and dropped into a Doyle-like *Hound of the Baskervilles* setting. Among the famous faces present in the castle on the moors, thanks to the graphics of one of comicdom's finest artists, Jim Steranko, cigar-smoking Nick Fury meets Vincent Price, Peter Cushing and butler Angus, "played by" Boris Karloff. Since the story was almost pure Gothic, with howling dogs, crashing suits of armor, full moons and the like, the presence of Karloff and the others was more than fitting.

The Marvel Comics Group, in their imitation of the old *Mad* comics, *Not Brand Echh*, has featured Boris Karloff on a number of occasions. The 9th issue, August 1968, featured the *Archie* lampoon "Arch and the Teen Stalk!", with a Karloff Frankenstein Monster replacing the famous giant. But as the chalk-faced creature meets destruction after a fatal plunge from his sky city to the Earth, he is revealed as merely a robot, worked by "Arch's" pal "Plughead".

Two motion pictures starring Boris Karloff were adapted to the illustrated pages in "Movie Classics" from Dell Comics; *Die, Monster Die*, 1965, and, the following year, *Mad Monster Party*, a film in which the actor's voice was dubbed over the actions performed by a puppet. In March 1963, Dell used the original Karloff Monster as the basis for their *Frankenstein* comic book, copying many stills from the movie for the interior and primarily the cover artwork. With *Frankenstein* #2, the Monster character became a costumed super-hero, ignoring Karloff's features altogether. Also in 1963, Dell adapted Universal's horror classic *The Mummy* into a one-shot comic book venture, basing their gauze-wrapped villain on the British performer.

The 1964 television comedy show, *The Munsters*, from Universal, featured Fred Gwynne as a smiling, retired and non-violent Frankenstein Monster. Gwynne's made-up face

bore a ridiculous resemblance to the serious countenance of Karloff. The Karloff-inspired idea was also transferred to the printed medium in *The Munsters*, published by Gold Key Comics, running 16 issues from 1964 to 1968.

It was in the Gold Key line, however, that Karloff's most significant appearance was made—in a magazine of his own. *Thriller*, an 80-page, 25¢ comic book, appeared on the newsstands in October 1962. Boris Karloff, as on the television program, introduced each story, which usually involved some area of the fantastique. *Thriller* #2 was published in January 1963, maintaining the format.

There never was a true third issue of *Thriller*, although the concept and numbering system continued. The title was changed, after the network cancellation of the *Thriller* television program, to perhaps the more commercial *Boris Karloff's Tales of Mystery*. The magazine had been changed to the standard 12¢ comic book size; and now, with at least 26 issues published, the Boris Karloff comic book is as popular as ever before.

Boris Karloff's comic book appearances, whether as himself or in the guise of Frankenstein's immortal Monster, have been uncountable. It would be both insignificant and impossible to attempt listing all of them. I have hopefully presented a more or less comprehensive sampling of such appearances in this chapter.

We might recall the cliché saying, "Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery." That Karloff's image was imitated innumerable times on the comic page shows the high regard artists and writers have had for the beloved actor.

Yes, Boris Karloff in all the manifestations of mass media has attained the universal goal of mankind. He has truly become immortal.

FRIDAY THE 13th

Woody Langley reports Joel A. Spivak

Note: This article was scheduled for the fifth issue of a short-lived magazine called *Modern Monsters*. It was set in type but the publication was discontinued before the article was published.

Envision, if you will, Boris Karloff, the creator of countless images we treasure so highly, coming face to face with *The Cynic*—a man who seeks to destroy our most valued

possessions of mind and soul. Such a confrontation took place on a recent Friday the 13th in Los Angeles on radio station KLAC, lair of The Cynic.

The Cynic, in reality, Joel A. Spivak, is a fiend of many aliases. Some Eastern readers may best remember him as *Pembroke Thing*, host of the horror show THING THEATER on WPRO-TV in Providence, Rhode Island, that had a successful run of nearly two years. Since moving to Hollywood he has sought to debase such institutions as the hot dog, apple pie and *Batman!* That encounter transpired early in 1966.

Recovering from his attack on law and order, The Cynic began his degradation of that blackest of days, Friday the 13th. This time he did not reckon with the forces of evil. In the midst of one of these outlandish harangues on superstition Spivak was suddenly interrupted by the mysterious appearance of a white-haired English gentleman.

We now take pleasure in setting down the exchange that took place between Mr. Karloff and The Cynic. Let it stand as a warning to anyone who would dare defile the hallowed grounds of the supernatural.

SPIVAK: You're not going to believe this because it's a little incredible but the door just opened to the studio and Boris Karloff walked in. I can't imagine why he would walk into this studio but he did and he's sitting down over here. Did I say something which made you want to come here, Mr. Karloff?

KARLOFF: Well, it may be something to do with the date.

S: Oh, Friday the 13th? You mean you were attracted here because of something I said about Friday the 13th?

K: I think I must have been. A psychic force drew me, put it that way.

S: Well, Mr. Karloff, you don't mean to tell me that a distinguished actor, a man of your stature in the community, actually believes in Friday the 13th?

K: Why shouldn't I? What's wrong with Friday the 13th?

S: Uhhh . . . well . . . it's ridiculous! What could possibly lead you to believe that there is some supernatural force which forces people to have bad luck on Friday the 13th?

K: Well, have you ever heard of black cats and walking under ladders and that sort of thing?

S: I've heard of it but I find it to be completely and utterly preposterous!

K: Would you walk under a ladder if you saw a painter half-way up with a pot of paint?

S: Yes . . .

K: In a high wind?

S: Yes, I would!

K: Then you don't need Friday the 13th for your bad luck.

S: Are you implying, Mr. Karloff, that I am a boob?

K: Nooo . . . but I doubt if you would do it. I think you're rather boasting.

S: Since you walked into this studio I must tell you that you did something once which I'm sure was a great source of pleasure to you and certainly was to my family and that is children's records. I don't know how many of them you made but we have one at home that my children love dearly.

K: It was great fun doing them for the two girls in New York. In all there was a baker's dozen or something like that. They were stories from Kipling, and English fairy tales and all that sort of thing. So don't ask me to turn my back on superstition.

S: Well, I'm sure that in your long career you've had quite a bit to do with it. Is superstition a fascination of yours? I would think that you would think the whole thing was very dull.

K: Superstition, in a way, is sort of connected with legends and folklore and fairy tales and that sort of thing. And the majority of films that I've had the chance to work in always seems to have an audience—not for me, I don't mean that at all—but for that *kind* of film because they do have their roots in the fairy tales and the folklore and the legends in practically every race in the world. That's why I think they last.

S: People always talk about this with you, I'm sure, but you played a lot of frightening characters in your time in pictures and one of them in particular was the famous Frankenstein monster . . .

K: The best friend I ever had. Changed the whole course of my life.

S: I think a great many people who saw the film—I know I did—felt a great sympathy for the monster and were not repelled by him at all.

K: I'm glad you said that because it was very rewarding to me. I got letters, as we all do from time to time, and everything that I received from youngsters, if they said anything at all beyond just asking for a photograph, was always to express great compassion for the monster.

S: And I bet you felt great compassion for him, too.
K: No, you mustn't. If you want to arouse compassion you have to reject it—completely.
S: So you hated the monster . . .
K: No! But if you tried to play it to sympathy it's a sure way of not being able to get it.
S: Why, of all people, you, Boris Karloff, who are certainly no monster yourself, did you always get tagged into that kind of role?
K: Well, I was jolly lucky. I was in a film out at Universal at the time—I forget what it was: just an ordinary straight part—and I was invited to make a test of the monster. The make-up man, Jack Pierce, who was a brilliant make-up man, took a long time to work it out. The people at Universal liked the make-up and I got the job and, as I say, it changed the whole course of my life. I'd been in Hollywood for 10 years before that happened and nobody knew it but me!
S: What were you doing, playing benefits at the polo matches? (Laughter)
K: I was struggling around in films and not actually getting anywhere and for about a year and-a-half things got so rough in the middle twenties I drove a building material truck.
S: Not with those lead shoes on, I hope.
K: Not with the lead shoes on but the sacks of cement on my back were even worse.
S: How would you like *him* to drive up to your door and deliver a sack of cement, folks? That would set you up for the whole day! (Laughter) I know that you just finished a film at MGM. Can you tell us something about it?
K: It's THE VENETIAN AFFAIR and it's a brilliantly made film. I believe they went to Venice for backgrounds. I just have a small part in it but it was, I thought, a rich part. It was well written and well paced in the film. The interesting thing about it, which I just learned, it's directed by Jerry Thorpe. He was just a name to me since I don't live here very much and it turns out that he is the son of a Richard Thorpe who was a director in the silent days who gave me the first part I ever had in a film outside of an extra.
S: How long have you been making films, Mr. Karloff?
K: I've been *in* films, put it that way, one way or another since 1920.
S: I am fascinated. I think I could sit here and talk to you

for the rest of the day but you haven't done anything to reinforce my feeling about Friday the 13th. Boris Karloff, I still think it's a bunch of hogwash. Nevertheless, I think everybody will go out and see your film. Do you wear lead shoes in this one?

K: No, no, no. I have a straight part. I'm a man who has a private intelligence agency. It's a spy story but I'm on the right side of the fence for once.

S: Does that make you feel good?

K: Makes me feel very good!

S: Well, we're delighted to have talked with you. Incidentally, before you go, is there some manifestation that you could give me that would uhhh . . . for instance: somebody sent me a little doll and it's one of these things that you stick a pin into. Have you ever seen one of these things?

K: I've heard of them, yes.

S: Have you ever had any experience with them?

K: Is the doll in your image?

S: Well, it looks a little bit like me.

K: Give me a package of pins.

S: We might as well disprove this thing right now. Here's a hat pin and here's the doll. Now you go ahead and if there's something to this something is going to happen to me. Watch this, folks.

K: I can guarantee you a little discomfort. I think.

S: Well, go ahead and stick the pin in.

K: In!

S: OWWWWWWW! Well, that finishes it! You can stay here and do the rest of the program and I will leave! Forget it with Friday the 13th! Goodby! (Door slams)

K: Well, so much for a disbelief in superstition. I hope I taught him a lesson.

FINAL ACT

Walter James Daugherty

Unlike many actors who have gained recognition for their work in Gothic pictures, Boris Karloff did not "look down" on the type of roles he played. On the contrary, he was a devotee of Gothic literature although to my knowledge he had no scholarly approach to the mythical world. His atti-

tude on this subject was a feeling of gratitude for the roles he received in the horror genre. This is a known fact because on no less than three occasions I heard him voice these sentiments.

Bypassing for the moment his fine acting ability, two of the outstanding things which were characteristic in his excellent portrayals were his seemingly gaunt appearance and, of course, the magnificent lisp-like quality of his voice. Naturally, this last characteristic made him a favorite with impersonators throughout the world.

We so often speak of actors and actresses who have the ability to make everyday theatergoers and critics alike remark in their own particular type of phraseology, "He is not a typed actor. With masterful ease, he is able to tackle all types of roles." In the case of Karloff, this would sound ridiculous, since everybody knows (?) that he was a "monster man".

We may find that the average well-known actor of varied character roles portrays, with equal ease, a millionaire industrialist, a bum in a Damon Runyan off-broadway script, a psychopathic killer or a lovable old father in a Deanna Durbin picture.

Few people realize that Boris Karloff holds a rare distinction. I know of no other prominent motion picture star who maintained a "lead role status" for over 37 years. Beginning with his role in FRANKENSTEIN, he was never billed in other than a starring capacity and, with very few lulls, starred right up to the time of his demise.

He portrayed the pathetic Dr. Frankenstein's monster; the evil, yet human, 3700-year-old mummy; doctors dedicated to science; and on several occasions, fine comedy roles (as illustrated by several of his appearances on TV) where he buffooned the monsters. I say "buffooned," but really I must qualify that by saying that he only portrayed a lightly humorous look at the monsters while maintaining a thorough respect for his monster roles.

I was an ardent follower of Karloff the actor and Karloff the man since I was a young boy and was first shaken up by his portrayal of the Frankenstein creature. It was my pleasure in the last few years of his life to become his personal friend. Upon my first meeting with him, I was immediately impressed by his gentlemanly manner, which had been written up by so many columnists. There was an overpowering impression which no one could fail to recognize from the very beginning of any association with him. There was a distinct and very sincere gentleness about the man.

It was a strange enigma to find this characteristic in a man whom I had known for years only as a man of horror.

I cannot recall one time in our several meetings that, time permitting, we failed to discuss one of our mutual interests —gardening—as more than just an enjoyable pastime. In fact, during the time spent on the set of the four Mexican horror features which he completed in 1968, we discussed at great length about his garden in England. There was a sad smile on his face as we spoke. You must realize that, because of his wheelchair condition, it was no longer a practical discussion based on a comparison of notes about the growing of various plants but instead a matter of "what I used to be able to do." Mr. Karloff was far from an amateur in the hobby of plants. Although no words crept into his conversation about this loss, it was evident in his eyes.

He was also a man who was always appreciative of a good joke and was there and ready with a bit of humor himself. There was a joke that he liked which would be called a Hollywood "in-the-business" joke but nevertheless recognizable to the uninitiated.

"There were two Hollywood talent agents standing across the street from a motion picture preview. They were watching the actors arrive, to the accolades of the crowd assembled. When the star arrived (who was represented by one of the agents), he turned to his buddy and said, 'Look at him, taking the credits and 90% of my income!' " This, of course, was followed by Mr. Karloff's wonderful and captivating smile.

Do not let the type of roles that he portrayed lull you into the feeling that he was not an "actor's actor". His acting ability was proven some time before his appearance in horror films. He was highly respected by his fellow workers. When the cameras were ready to roll on the set of the Mexican movies, it was magnificent to watch the man rise out of his wheelchair, stretch up to his full stature and "sink his teeth" into the roles. Knowing the illnesses that beset him in his last few years, it was a very decided transition to see this man get everything out of the characterization—and then, upon the director's "Cut!", drop back again into his wheelchair, a very ill man.

I recall one scene with Yerye Berut (Mexico's Monster Actor) in which, after two rehearsals, Mr. Karloff called Mr. Berut aside (within my earshot), at which time he told him, "Yerye, this is your scene. I realize that you are holding back because of me. Grab ahold of the part and play it for all it's worth! I repeat, this is your scene. Let me stay

in the background and follow through." In this day of fighting for recognition and scene-stealing by stars, it was so refreshing to see an actor give the scene to another.

When Mr. Karloff finished the last scene he was to play in these four movies, the director stepped in front of the studio lights and announced to the crew and cast that this was Mr. Karloff's last scene, and he expressed his gratitude and voiced the pleasure of the group assembled for his fine acting and cooperation in the picture. No one present could possibly have known that this was to be Boris Karloff's final farewell speech to a cast and crew on a full-length motion picture. Had anyone known, I don't believe the scene could have been more dramatic.

Mr. Karloff rose from his wheelchair and addressed the group, emphasizing his pleasure in working with them and his pleasure at once again completing not one but four full-length pictures. It was evident for all to see that there were unabashed tears in his eyes, indicating his sincerity. Needless to say, the applause was resounding as his stand-in wheeled him off to his dressingroom.

It was my privilege to shoot the last formal portraits taken of Mr. Karloff. I had wanted to photograph the man for years but the opportunity had not been accorded me. There was a lull on the set and the make-up man for Mr. Karloff (who had admired some of my portraits of the rest of the cast) took several of my pictures over to Mr. Karloff and showed them to him. After looking at about half of them, he called me over and wanted affirmation that I had done the work. Upon being assured that I had, he was extremely complimentary and when the make-up man told him that I wanted the opportunity for a private sitting, he was extremely enthusiastic. In fact, it was just at this particular moment that the director was calling Mr. Karloff on to the set. He was ready to have the portraits done right then and there, and it was only after being assured that I would be on the picture for another few days and could do it at a more convenient time, that he finally accepted the call of the director and went on the set for a scene. Later in the afternoon, off-scene where I had set up portrait equipment with the assistance of the crew, I finally realized a strong ambition and photographed Boris Karloff under my own controlled conditions.

The next day, after working most of the night developing and printing, I returned to the set with several 16″ x 20″ pictures. They were delivered to him in his dressingroom, where the rest of his family was present. I returned a short

time later and you can imagine my great pleasure when he stated they were the finest portraits that he had ever had taken—sentiments echoed by his wife. I gave him the copies that I had, from which they selected one to become his fan mail picture from then on.

* * *

And so we close on the last chapter in the life of a fine actor and a true gentleman, beloved by all who worked with him or had been in an association with him for any length of time. His monster portrayals will not "become" classics—for they already were in his own time—and will continue so as long as there is an interest in cinematic art. His star is among the many greats on the sidewalks of Hollywood Boulevard—but it shines even brighter up there where his Creator is not a make-up man.

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